

a nature to require secrecy, such orders have been sent through the medium of a Secret Committee of three of the Court of Directors of your Petitioners, according to the provisions in that case made by Parliament, without any privity of your Petitioners or of their Court of Directors, and without any discretionary authority on the part of the Members of such Secret Committee.

That between the period when such claim, as here-in-before mentioned, was first made, on the part of the Public, to the territorial acquisitions in the East Indies, and the year 1793, a further acquisition of territory was made in India.

That the term, heretofore granted to your Petitioners in the exclusive trade to the East Indies, being about to be redeemed in the year 1794, an act of parliament was made and passed in the thirty-third year of the reign of His present Majesty*, whereby it was enacted, amongst many other things, that† the territorial acquisitions in certain former acts mentioned, together with the territorial acquisitions then lately obtained in the East Indies, with the revenues thereof respectively, should continue in the possession of your Petitioners, during the further term by that act granted in the said exclusive trade‡; and that your Petitioners should have the exclusive trade within the limits mentioned in the said act of parliament passed in the ninth year of the reign of King William the Third, subject nevertheless to such right of trading as is thereby given to individuals, to be carried on in the manner therein mentioned, and subject to a proviso to determine such right at any time, upon three years notice to be given by Parliament, after the 1st day of March 1811, upon the expiration of the said three years, and upon payment made to your Petitioners of any sum or sums, which, under the provisions of any act of that session of Parliament, should or might, upon the expiration of the said three years, become payable to your Petitioners by the Public, according to the true intent and

* 23 Geo. III. cap. 52.

† Sec. 1.

‡ Sec. 71.

meaning of such act: but it was enacted*, that nothing in that proviso, or in any proviso in the said act in the ninth year of the reign of King William the Third, in the said charter of the 5th of September, in the tenth year of his reign, or in any other act or charter, should extend to determine the corporation of your Petitioners; and by the said act† certain appropriations were made of all the profits arising from the territorial acquisitions and revenues in India, and also from the sale of goods, and all other profits of your Petitioners in Great Britain, during the time of the exclusive trade thereby granted to your Petitioners.

That the notice required by the last-mentioned act of parliament hath been given by the Speaker of your Honourable House, for determining the exclusive trade of your Petitioners, on the 10th day of April 1814.

That since the passing the said last mentioned act, a further acquisition of territory and revenue in India has been made, and is now in the possession of your Petitioners. And your Petitioners also shew, that they have taken all the forts and factories which belong to the French, Dutch, and Danes in Hindostan: and your Petitioners are now in possession, as well of the territories mentioned in the said last mentioned act of parliament, as of those which have been since acquired; and the British dominions in India, without a rival or any enemy, now consist of a very large proportion of the peninsula, besides very extensive provinces in the north of Hindostan, and contain, as it is supposed, above fifty millions of inhabitants, and have been acquired wholly at the expence and risk of your Petitioners, without any charge whatever to the British Exchequer: for though land forces belonging to His Majesty have been employed in conjunction with the forces raised by your Petitioners; yet the whole of the expence of such forces of His Majesty, whilst they have been employed in such service, as well as for their passage out and home, and in recruiting, has been defrayed by your Petitioners: besides which, for a considerable

* Sec. 74.

† Sec. 107 to 112.

length of time, your Petitioners furnished or paid for victualling and stores for the use of His Majesty's ships of war in the East Indies.

Your Petitioners beg leave humbly to represent, that the welfare and happiness of the inhabitants of the countries which have come under the care of your Petitioners, have been their chief object; and they have reason to hope and believe, that the amelioration of the condition of the people is most eminently conspicuous. When Hindostan was first visited by British traders, and long after the union of the two Companies before-mentioned, when the opposition, not only of British subject against British subject, but of European against European, and the corrupt and impolitic attempts which were constantly made by one party, to raise the despotic powers of the Indian States against other parties, had in some measure ceased, the character of the native governments, as well as of the native individuals, remained unchanged; the ill usage which they had received from individual and associated Europeans, roaming about without responsibility or controul, raised a jealousy and animosity against every stranger without distinction, and the internal state of the country, where justice and injustice were equally articles of traffic to be bought and sold, left the rights of persons and property entirely at hazard.

Your Petitioners found the country divided into many different states, all feudatory to the Mogul, who was considered the sole proprietor of the whole. These states were again divided amongst Zemindars and chiefs, with other designations, under whom there were sub-infendations down to the Ryots, who were the actual cultivators of the soil, and no man held any land, and scarcely a crop, but at the will of another of superior power; there were no effectual means of resort for the support of any right or the avenging any wrong, and the will of the strongest was the only practical rule of conduct which was established. Under the management of your Petitioners, the scene has been entirely changed. By fixing certain permanent and invariable rents, a new and valuable property has been, as it

were, created to the natives. By the establishment of courts of justice, and the appointment of liberal emoluments to those who devote their lives to the study and administration of laws adapted to the usages, customs, and religions of the inhabitants, they have removed temptations to corruption, and have provided the means for the inhabitants to be insured in the enjoyment of property thus created for them. Courts of criminal judicature have also been universally erected, which have effectually provided for personal liberty and security. By the alterations which have taken place, the practical means of foreign commerce, of traffic from port to port and internally, have been facilitated, very greatly to its increase.

That it may not be supposed that your Petitioners have assumed merits which they are not entitled to, they beg leave to refer to the Fifth Report of the Select Committee of this Honourable House on the Affairs of the East India Company, which was presented to this Honourable House on the 28th day of July last.

Notwithstanding the ameliorated condition of the natives of India under the government of your Petitioners, to which they have been accustomed, yet the tranquillity of the country is not maintained by a physical force, but chiefly by moral influence, and in a great degree even by prejudice; any change would alarm them; and their submission to British authority would be greatly endangered by an unrestrained resort of Europeans in search of wealth, either by commerce or other means, at distances from the principal seats of government, or in such numbers at those seats, as to be beyond the controul of the governors; and by the resort of persons who may not have such connection with, and interest to uphold, the authority of the ruling power, as will insure the utmost care in their conduct, not only not to irritate, but positively to conciliate the natives with whom they may have dealings.

Your Petitioners beg leave to represent, that their military establishments, artillery, and marine, have been of other most important advantages to this nation, inasmuch as in the several European wars in which this

society has been engaged since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the forces of your Petitioners alone, or in conjunction with the forces of His Majesty, at the expence of your Petitioners, have taken all the settlements belonging to the Europeans on the continent of India, with whom this nation has been at war: and such captures have formed part of the price of national peace, without any compensation to your Petitioners: and, upon the suggestion of His Majesty's Ministers, your Petitioners sent a large force from India into Egypt, by the Red Sea, to co-operate with His Majesty's forces against the French, in the year 1801; and, in the present war, by expeditions equipped from India, all the possessions of the French, Dutch, and Danes, in the East, have been conquered: and though, as to such of those expeditions, the accounts of which have been settled, your Petitioners have been allowed considerable sums on the part of the Public, yet such allowances were calculated to reimburse only a part of the vast expenditure actually advanced by your Petitioners for those great national objects.

Your Petitioners humbly hope, they will be found to have been as attentive to, and as successful in the cultivation of the trade with China, as they have been with respect to the concerns in India. The peculiarities of the Chinese, and the delicacy attendant upon any intercourse with them, must be too well known, as matter of history, to every Member of this Honourable House, to require any statement of it in this Petition: it will be sufficient to inform this Honourable House, that it is but a little more than one hundred years since any trade whatever has been carried on between this country and China, and that, at this time, about forty-six thousand tons of shipping are employed by your Petitioners therein, and that your Petitioners entertain in China, for the purposes of that trade, a regular establishment of servants, called supra-cargoes, and others of inferior ranks, whose business it is to keep up a connection with the few merchants, or more properly mercantile officers, of the Chinese government, who are deputed to manage, on the part of the Chinese, all the

commercial transactions between Great Britain and China. By this means the trade has been cherished and preserved through, and notwithstanding, many perils arising from circumstances apparently trivial, and the fatal consequences of which could only have been averted by the most delicate conduct, and by the whole commercial concerns of the British nation being confided to one united authority.

Your Petitioners feel it incumbent upon them to submit to this Honourable House an abstract of their financial operations since the arrangement contained in the above-mentioned act of the thirty-third year of the reign of His present Majesty was made. At that time the capital stock of your Petitioners amounted to the sum of £5,000,000: since that period, in pursuance of an act of Parliament passed for that purpose, the capital stock has been increased by the sum of £1,000,000, contributed by the subscribers at the rate of £200 per cent.

At the time when the act of the thirty-third of His Majesty* was passed, sundry debts, incurred in the defence and protection of the British possessions in India, bearing interest, were then due and owing by your petitioners, amounting to seven millions of pounds sterling, or thereabouts. Since that period the said debt has been very much increased for the same purpose, and great part of such increased debt was raised upon loans, by the terms of which the creditors were entitled to the option of being paid off in India, or by bills of exchange to be drawn upon London; and upon such obligations becoming due, your Petitioners have been obliged to provide, out of their funds and credit at home, the means of paying bills of exchange drawn upon them since the year 1807, to the amount of £10,902,924 sterling in discharge of Indian debt: and the debt contracted for political purposes, now remaining due in India, according to the latest advices from thence, amounts to the sum of £26,000,000, or thereabouts, over and besides the sum of £3,000,000 Re-

* 33 Geo. III., cap. 52, sec. 108.

duced three per cent. Annuities, and the sum of £1,400,000 Consolidated three per cent. Annuities, on which the sum of £2,500,000 sterling was raised, in pursuance of an act passed in the last session of Parliament, to enable your Petitioners to pay bills of exchange which had been drawn upon them from India, in part discharge of the Indian debt, as herein-before mentioned, and also over and besides the sum of £2,202,000, or thereabouts, now owing by your Petitioners upon bills of exchange not yet due, but payable in London, which have been drawn in India, in further part discharge of the said Indian debt.

That the revenues of the territorial acquisitions in India, in the possession of your Petitioners in the year 1793, amounted to the annual sum of £8,000,000, or thereabouts; and, by the latest accounts and estimates received from the East-Indies, the revenues of the territorial acquisitions, now in the possession of your Petitioners, amount to the annual sum of £16,000,000 or thereabouts: but the civil and military expences of the government have proportionably increased.

That the profits of the trade carried on by your Petitioners since the year 1793, to the latest period to which the accounts can be correctly estimated, have amounted to the sum of £6,289,405, over and above the commercial charges of your Petitioners, and beyond the payment of interest on their bond debt in England, and besides the dividends from time to time paid on the capital stock of your Petitioners, according to the directions of the said act of Parliament passed in the thirty-third year of the reign of His present Majesty.

That, in 1793, the bond debt in England of your Petitioners amounted to the sum of £3,200,000, or thereabouts: since which, by an act of Parliament passed in the year 1797*, they have been empowered to raise money, by increasing their capital stock by the amount of £2,000,000; but your Petitioners have not availed themselves of that resource, but under the

* 37 Geo. III. cap. 31.

authority of several acts of Parliament *, they have raised money upon bond, and their bond debt in England now amounts to the sum of £5,409,325; but your Petitioners are entitled by law to issue bonds, to the amount of £7,000,000 in the whole.

That the annual interest upon the present amount of the Indian debt now amounts to the sum of £1,600,000, or thereabouts; and as, by the terms of the loans on which such money was raised, the creditors are entitled to receive their interest by payment of money in India, or by bills of exchange to be drawn and made payable in London, at rates favourable to the holders, and judging from the amount drawn within the last half year, your Petitioners estimate that the annual sum of £1,500,000, or thereabouts, will be necessary to be provided annually in London, for the payment of such interest: besides which, although the several sums of money payable in respect of the reduced and consolidated annuities (on which the said sum of £2,500,000 was raised by virtue of the said act of the last session of Parliament), for interest and sinking fund attendant thereon, amounting altogether to the annual sum of £242,820, are expressly charged upon the revenues of the territorial acquisitions in the East-Indies, yet your Petitioners are bound by the said act, at all events, to pay such sums of money into the Bank of England, in manner in the said act mentioned; and your Petitioners will also be obliged to provide in London the interest and other charges which may be attendant upon any further loan which may be necessary, in consequence of the said further sum of £2,202,000, part of the Indian debt, for which bills of exchange drawn upon your Petitioners are now outstanding; and it is estimated, that political charges (including payments to be made to the creditors of the late Nabobs of the Carnatic) consequential upon the Indian territory, to the annual amount of £910,000,

* 34 Geo. III. cap. 41; 47 Geo. III. cap. 41, sess. 2; 51 Geo. III., cap. .

or thereabouts, will be to be defrayed in England; and as, from the best estimates which can be made, there appears but little reason to expect (without a considerable reduction of the military expences of your Petitioners in India) that there should be any sufficient surplus revenue to be remitted for those purposes, your Petitioners apprehend that the punctual discharge of the pecuniary obligations of your Petitioners, in relation thereto, as well as the payment of the interest upon their bond debt in England, and the dividends on their capital stock, will depend most essentially upon the trade to be carried on by your Petitioners.

That in pursuance of several acts of Parliament since 1807*, your Petitioners have increased their bond debt in England, by the sum of £2,409,325; and, in pursuance of an act of Parliament passed in the fiftieth year of the reign of His present Majesty, your Petitioners have borrowed Exchequer bills of the public to the amount of £1,500,000; and, by virtue of an act passed in the last session of Parliament, as herein-before mentioned, your Petitioners raised on loan, by way of reduced and consolidated annuities, the sum of £2,500,000: and all such sums of money, together with the said sum of £6,289,405, which has arisen from the surplus profits of the trade carried on by your Petitioners, as herein-before mentioned, have been absorbed, by payment of debts and expences incurred in respect of the territorial acquisitions in India.

That in the expeditions on the part of the British nation against the European enemies of His Majesty, and by advances for His Majesty's navy, and other public services, your Petitioners have incurred very large expences, which, they submit, they are entitled to be reimbursed by the public: and your Petitioners compute, that after allowing such sum as your Petitioners are indebted to the Public for the loan of Exchequer bills, to the amount of £1,500,000, as herein-before

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* 47 Geo. III. sess. 2., cap. 41; 51 Geo. III. cap. ; 50 Geo. III. cap. ; 52 Geo. III. cap. 135.

mentioned, pursuant to an act for that purpose passed in the last session of Parliament *, and after allowing such sums as your Petitioners are indebted to His Majesty for troops in India, and for recruiting, the sum of £2,294,426, at the least, will be found due to your Petitioners.

Your Petitioners have now exhibited, they hope with candour, the real situation of their affairs, and of the British trade and relations with the East-Indies and China. Your Petitioners do not presume to offer an opinion, whether any other arrangements, than those which have taken place, would have led to results equally, or more advantageous, than have arisen to their country : but they apprehend it to be quite undeniable, that the privileges entrusted to your Petitioners have produced a large quantity of positive benefit to the British empire ; and they submit, that any material change in the Indian system would be matter of experiment, for which there can be no sufficient data from which its success can be calculated.

Your Petitioners feel it to be their duty to express to this Honourable House their sincere opinion, that the public interest cannot be better consulted, than by continuing your Petitioners as the sole organs and channel, both for the trade with and the government of India, upon the principles established by the act of the thirty-third year of His Majesty's reign, with such variations, as to the financial appropriations, and in some other points of detail, as present circumstances require and experience has pointed out. Your Petitioners ask not for an exclusive trade upon the narrow principles of monopoly, for the mere purpose of commercial gain ; they have under their care interests of a much more extended and liberal nature, which it is their duty to attend to. Your Petitioners are ready to become parties to any arrangement, which shall be consistent with the rights of your Petitioners and the security of British India, and which will not deprive your Petitioners of the means of fulfilling their pecuniary en-

agements with the Public and individuals, or the performance of the functions which may be continued or allotted to them. They hope they will not be deemed presumptuous, in humbly submitting their opinion, considered and reconsidered, that the opening of the trade with China, in any degree, would endanger its existence altogether; and your Petitioners have, at no time, contemplated any alteration even in the export trade to the East-Indies, without considerable doubt and hesitation: but your Petitioners are firmly of opinion, that the unrestrained liberty of importation from that country, otherwise than through the medium of the establishments of your Petitioners in London, would produce effects, which every well-wisher to his country must deprecate, and which would put to extreme hazard any pledge, on the part of your Petitioners, for the good government of India or the performance of their obligations. Your Petitioners submit, that they would not be justified in becoming parties to any system, which, on consideration, should appear to them likely to prove an illusion.

As your Petitioners do not venture to anticipate what may be the determination of this Honourable House upon the question hereby submitted to its decision, your Petitioners hope, that they will be excused for humbly stating what, in the event of the dissolution of the present system, they conceive would be found to be the rights of your Petitioners, as well as their fair pretensions upon the justice and liberality of Parliament. The absolute right of your Petitioners, for their own use, to a considerable part of the forts, towns, islands, territories, and rights, which they have acquired abroad, never has been questioned, and your Petitioners believe it to be unquestionable; and notwithstanding the claim made for the Public to other parts of the territorial acquisitions and revenues of your Petitioners, they entertain a strong hope, that the property, as well in those parts which were acquired by conquest, under the powers of peace and war lawfully exercised by your Petitioners, as in those parts which were otherwise acquired, would be found to belong to

your Petitioners, in the same way as any other property within His Majesty's dominions belongs to the owners thereof, subject to the sovereignty and allegiance due to His Majesty: but even supposing it should be determined, contrary to the sense and expectations of your Petitioners touching their rights, that those places were not the property of your Petitioners, your Petitioners submit, that, in that case, if the possession were to be assumed on the part of the Public, your Petitioners would have a just right to reimbursement of the expences which they have incurred in acquiring and maintaining them, and in making the fortifications, and civil and military buildings and works which your Petitioners have erected and improved upon them, with a compensation for the services and risk of your Petitioners, during the long time which they have had the possession and government of such territories, under the confirmation of Parliament, and all other charges incurred by your Petitioners relative to such territories. These expences and charges amount to many millions of money. Your Petitioners also submit, that they have a just claim to be reimbursed all the sums they have paid, in discharge of debts contracted on account of the territories, and to be indemnified against all other debts in respect of them, and which now remain undischarged.

Your Petitioners do not question, as an abstract principle, the right of any of His Majesty's subjects, to trade with any part of His Majesty's dominions; but your Petitioners humbly submit, that it cannot be contended, that any persons can have a right, except with the consent of your Petitioners, to use the settlements, factories, and seats of trade, or to avail themselves of the means and facilities, moral and physical, which your Petitioners, at a great expence and risk, have created or acquired, and now, at great current charge, maintain, for the purposes of commerce and civil intercourse.

Your Petitioners, therefore, most humbly pray, that this Honourable House will take the premises into its consideration, and make such

provision, as in its wisdom, it shall see fit, for continuing the government of the territorial acquisitions in the East-Indies in your Petitioners, and for settling the trade to the East-Indies and China and other places, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Streights of Magellan, according to the present system; or that your Petitioners may have such relief in the premises as their case may require.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

Copy of a further Petition from the EAST-INDIA COMPANY to the Honorable HOUSE OF COMMONS.

To the Honorable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled,

The humble Petition of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East-Indies,

SHEWETH:

That loans of very large sums of money have heretofore been raised in India, on the credit of your Petitioners, for the defence and protection of the British possessions there, by the terms of which loans the creditors were entitled to the option of being paid off in India, or by bills of exchange to be drawn upon London; and upon, and in consequence of such obligations becoming due, bills to the amount of £13,104,924 have been drawn, since the year 1807, upon your Petitioners, payable in London, and the sum of £10,902,924, part of the said sum of £13,104,924, has been discharged by your Petitioners,

and £2,202,000, residue thereof, now remains outstanding, and the larger part of the bills drawn for the same will become due previous to the month of March 1814.

That, for the purpose of enabling your Petitioners to pay the said bills of exchange which they have so discharged to the amount of £10,902,924 they borrowed Exchequer bills of the Public, to the amount of £1,500,000 in pursuance of an act of parliament passed in the fiftieth year of the reign of His present Majesty, entitled, "An Act for granting to His Majesty a sum of Money to be raised by Exchequer Bills, and to be advanced and applied, in the Manner and upon the Terms therein mentioned, for the Relief of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies:" and your Petitioners also raised the sum of £2,500,000 upon reduced three pounds per centum annuities and consolidated three pounds per centum annuities, respectively, transferable at the Bank of England, in pursuance of an act of parliament made and passed in the fifty-second year of His Majesty's reign, entitled, "An Act for advancing £2,500,000 to the East-India Company, to enable them to discharge part of the Indian Debt."

That, by another act of parliament, made and passed in the fifty-second year of the reign of His present Majesty, entitled, "An Act to amend an Act of the fiftieth year of His present Majesty, for granting a Sum of Money to be raised by Exchequer Bills, to be advanced and applied, in the manner and upon the terms therein mentioned, for the Relief of the United Company of Merchants of England, trading to the East Indies," it is enacted, that it shall be lawful for the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury or any three or more of them, to carry to the credit of your Petitioners, in repayment of the sums advanced under the provisions of the said act of parliament of the fiftieth year of the reign of His present Majesty, any sum or sums of money which should have been advanced or disbursed by your Petitioners in the East Indies for His Majesty's navy or any public services.

That your Petitioners compute, that, after allowing in account such sum as your Petitioners are indebted to His Majesty for the loan of the said Exchequer Bills, that the sum of £2,294,426 at the least, is now due to your Petitioners, in respect of money which has been advanced or disbursed by your Petitioners in the East Indies for His Majesty's navy and other public services.

That, by virtue of an act of parliament passed in the thirty-seventh year of the reign of His present Majesty, entitled, "An Act to enable the East-India Company
" to raise money by further increasing their capital
" stock, and to extend the provisions now existing,
" respecting the present stock of the Company, to the
" said increased stock," your Petitioners are now authorized to raise money by increasing their capital stock by the sum of £2,000,000 but your Petitioners have not raised any money in exercise of the powers contained in the said act.

That your Petitioners are now authorised by law to raise money in England upon bonds, to the amount of seven millions, and your Petitioners have now issued bonds to the amount of £5,409,325 and are at liberty to issue further bonds to the further amount of £1,590,575: and by an act passed in the fifty-first year of the reign of His present Majesty, entitled, "An Act to enable the East India Company to raise
" a further sum of money upon bond, instead of in-
" creasing their capital stock, and to alter and amend
" an act passed in the forty-seventh year of the reign
" of His present Majesty relative thereto," it is provided, that when your Petitioners shall have raised, under and by virtue of the said act of the thirty-seventh year of the reign of His present Majesty, and of the said act of the forty-seventh year of the reign of His present Majesty and of that act, such sums of money as together should amount to the sum of four millions sterling, from thenceforth it should not be lawful for your Petitioners to raise any farther sum of money upon bond; and all money which, from thenceforth, should be raised by in-

crease of capital stock, under and by virtue of the said first-mentioned act, should be applied in discharge of the said bond debt, until the said bond debt, created by virtue of the said act of the forty-seventh year of the reign of his Majesty, or of that act, together with the money to be raised by increase of capital as aforesaid, should be reduced to the sum of four millions sterling.

That, upon an estimate of the probable receipts and payments of your Petitioners in England, including amongst the receipts the said sum of £2,294,426 so due from the Public to your Petitioners, as herein-before mentioned, it appears that it will be advantageous and necessary to the concerns of your Petitioners, that they should be authorised to raise the sum of £2,500,000 on loan, in a different manner from that in which they may now raise money, for the purpose of enabling them to discharge the said bills of exchange, to the amount of £2,202,000 drawn in liquidation of the Indian debt, to provide for their other current payments, and to enable your Petitioners, as circumstances may render it advisable, to reduce the amount of their bond debt, without increasing their capital stock.

Your Petitioners therefore most humbly pray, that this Honourable House will be pleased to direct the payment of the said sum of £2,294,426 so due by the Public to your Petitioners, as herein-before is mentioned, and to grant to your Petitioners such relief in the premises, as to this Honourable House shall seem meet.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

**REPORT of the COMMITTEE of CORRESPONDENCE
of the EAST-INDIA COMPANY, dated 9th Fe-
bruary 1813.**

The President of the India Board having, in his recent letter of the 4th January, referred the Court to the petitions presented to Parliament in the course of last session, from the Merchants and Manufacturers connected with the Outports, for fuller information than had been then imparted to the Court, concerning the representations which had induced His Majesty's Ministers to be of opinion, that the import trade from the East-Indies should not be confined to the Port of London, your Committee determined on examining those petitions, as they stand recorded in the votes of the House of Commons. But, in going into this task, your Committee found, that it involved a review of all the petitions lately preferred against a renewal of the Company's Charter, because the arguments in favour of the Outports were interspersed through them. The whole of those petitions have, therefore, been perused; and one remark, which immediately presents itself on that perusal,—a remark entitled, in the opinion of your Committee, to particular attention,—is, that those arguments in behalf of the Outports are, in a very material degree, the arguments which are directly urged for the abolition of the whole of the Company's exclusive commercial privileges; and the claims of the Outports are contended for, as a part of the entire freedom in the Eastern trade, which is demanded for all the subjects of the empire. The places, especially, which are strictly Outports, proceed in their petitions upon principles which arraign every species and degree of monopoly; and it is chiefly from those principles that they deduce, as a consequence, the right of the Outports to a free participation in Indian imports. But as, in the deliberate and just opinion of His Majesty's Ministers, those principles and argu-

ments are not valid for the main claim of the Petitioners, it is to be presumed, that neither can they, in the same opinion, be valid for the subordinate claim of the Outports, so far as it is rested on the same foundations, which, however, are the foundations built on by the generality of the Petitions. The few remaining arguments on this question, relate, principally, to the facility and certainty with which the revenue may be collected at the Outports, and to the safety with which the honourable men, composing the commercial class of this country, may be admitted to all the settlements and countries of the East. But these are mere assertions of opinion, to be classed with the "untried theories" of the time, and, as far as the light of experience goes, opposed by it. If they were even proved, which they are in no degree, they would not, by any means, satisfy all the great interests abroad and at home, which are involved in the question of the Outports; and therefore your Committee are entirely at a loss to discover, how the arguments in favour of those ports, as they stand in the petitions to Parliament, resting chiefly on principles which His Majesty's Government do not admit, have so presented themselves to the Ministers, as, in their view, "to establish a claim against an absolute restriction of the import trade to the port of London;" or how, from the *ex parte* representations of those petitions, which proceed on the demand of an entire liberty of trade to India and China, a demand resisted by His Majesty's Government, any clear definite idea is to be obtained of that degree of "liberty of trade, which the merchants may enjoy, without injury to other important national interests." And hence your Committee humbly conceive, that this problem, so important in its nature, namely, the measure of further liberty which may be safely granted, still remains to be solved, and requires deliberate and accurate investigation.

These remarks may, perhaps, receive some confirmation, from the succinct view which your Committee, enlarging somewhat their first design, are now about to submit, of the principal matters contained in

the petitions for the abolition of the Company's commercial privileges, and of the answers to which they are obviously liable. Although the same allegations, which are thus urged, have often been combated, it may be proper, on account of the channel in which they now come forward, and of the publicity of the present discussion, to give some distinct reply to them, which will, at least, further evince the disposition of the Court to shrink from no charge, and to shun no inquiry.

All the material objections which appear in those petitions to the renewal of the Company's charter, may be comprised under the following heads:—

1st.—That commercial monopolies, especially if extensive and long continued, are, in their nature, and according to the experience of past ages, inexpedient, impolitic, and unjust; and that the monopoly of a joint stock company must be managed with negligence, waste, and prodigality, unlikely to be practised by private merchants. (Some of the petitions admit, that monopolies may be tolerated in the beginnings of trade.)

2d.—That the monopoly of the East-India Company has been injurious to the nation, great evils having resulted from it:—that it is inadequate to an extended trade; has locked up national capital; has retarded improvement; has not advanced trade, nor carried it to many countries within the Company's limits:—that it cools the ardour of generous and liberal competition; has deprived the woollen manufacturers of Gloucester, Wiltshire, Exeter, Shrewsbury, and the manufactures of other places; some, of supplying an immense population; others, of preparing articles for China, on lower terms than the Company allow; others, of carrying on trade with India and the countries north of it; others of receiving orders, infinitely beyond what they now obtain from the East-India Company:—that it is (particularly in the opinion of the Staffordshire potters) unfavourable to the introduction of *new articles*:—

that its exports to the East do not amount to a fifth of the exports of this country to America :—that all ideas of participation in the profits of a monopoly trade, by payment into the Exchequer, ever will be vain and illusory ; of which the disappointment of the nation, in regard to the Company, is a complete illustration :—that the intention of opening the trade will be frustrated, by leaving the Company any controul over private trade :—that it is proved, by undeniable documents, that if the trade be allowed to remain under its present restrictions, it will languish, decay, and pass into the hands of other states :—that it must, if continued, *diminish* the sources of private wealth and national revenue :—that the reasonings in favour of the monopoly proceed from narrow, partial views, have been demonstrated fallacious, and will apply equally to every other branch of British commerce :—that it is humiliating to individuals, degrading to the national character, and a national grievance.

3d.—That, notwithstanding the *increase* of the Company's territories, their trade has *decreased*, though protected from enemies and hostile rivalry :—that, since the renewal of the Charter in 1793, they have added greatly to their debt :—that the pecuniary participation held out to the country in 1793, has not been realized, but has been converted by the East India Company into repeated claims on the public purse and credit, for enormous sums to support their establishments ; and that further, and still greater pecuniary assistance is now required, to avert embarrassments, in which they may be soon involved.

4th.—That a full and free right to trade to and with all countries and people in amity with His Majesty, and more particularly those countries *acquired and maintained by the efforts and valour of the forces of His Majesty*, is naturally the undoubted birthright and inheritance of the people of this empire, of every subject of it, and every

port in it; and that the unrestrained exercise of that right is essentially necessary to the maintenance of the manufacturers, and prosperity of the commerce of this country:—that the confinement of the Eastern trade to the port of London, would be a violation of that right, at once unnecessary, unjust, and impolitic:—unnecessary, because the duties may be collected with greater ease and less loss by pilferage in the Outports, the taxes on West-Indian and American produce being now collected with known safety:—unjust, because every mercantile place in the United Kingdom is entitled to the same privileges:—and impolitic, because the superior economy and dispatch that prevail in the Outports, are requisite to secure an equality with foreign nations. In these claims for the Outports, there is a general concurrence in the petitions from Plymouth, Glasgow, Paisly, Dundee, Arbroath, Leith, Edinburgh, Belfast, Bristol, Liverpool, and Hull; of which three last mentioned places Bristol and Liverpool state, that they have, in contemplation of the opening of the trade to India, enlarged their docks; and Hull, that there should be no restraint as to the size of vessels to be admitted into the Indian trade.

5th. That no satisfactory reason can be assigned, why the trade to China should not be opened:—that the difficulty apprehended in collecting the tea duties is ideal:—that the British character forbids injurious suspicions, as to inconveniences in India and China from opening the trade:—that, in the avowed opinion of one set of petitioners, the merchants of this country should be allowed to trade directly from the East to the British West-Indies; and another set claim, that the products of the East shall, without being first landed in this kingdom, be transported to the British West-Indies, the American colonies, and all other countries south of Cape Finisterre, and within the Mediterranean.

6th. That the existing monopoly has, contrary

to reason and justice, led to a singular peculiarity, —the concession of privileges to foreign nations in amity with his Majesty, which are rigorously denied to merchants of the British empire; or, according to others, that the trade is open to *all the world* except British merchants:—that the American States have long enjoyed this trade, at the expence of our own people, employing British capital, and compelling the Company to shrink from competition:—that they have engrossed a great part of this trade, and also of that to China, which the Company formerly possessed:—that the American merchants, being unfettered, have undersold the Company in the markets of Europe, have deprived them of those markets, and also the markets of South America, the West Indies, the Mediterranean, and Malta, whilst the English trade has become less extensive and profitable:—that the example of the citizens of the United States, who have evinced the superiority of individual industry, when opposed to the negligence and prodigality of a joint stock company, and the delays and abuses of their concerns, proves the competency of British individuals to carry on an extensive commerce to the East Indies, China, and other countries within the Charter of the Company:—that the monopoly is favorable to foreigners, injurious to British subjects, and its abolition necessary, to enable British merchants to meet neutrals, and other foreigners, in fair competition with the products of the East in their own markets: or, at least, according to others, that British subjects should be put on a footing with foreigners in this trade.

7th. That the distresses and privations of the manufacturing and trading classes (distresses aggravated, say some, by the monopoly of the East India Company), under the continental system of Bonaparte, the disputes with America, the exclusion from usual markets, the stagnation or decline of trade, are grievous:—that the mercantile, ma-

manufacturing, and shipping interests, all suffer:—that the country is burthened with great naval and military establishments;—and that, under such hardships, pressures, and exclusions, every possible relief is wanted, and new sources of trade ought to be looked for; and that, on account of the existing war, and for the maintenance of our naval superiority, and the preservation of our commercial, maritime, and financial interests, an open trade is necessary.

8th. That it is a well ascertained fact, that during the time of the Protectorate, there were men who boldly violated the Company's Charter, and carried on the trade with such success, that they were able to sell the commodities of the East in the different markets of Europe, on lower terms than had ever been known; and, at this day, individual merchants have traded to India with profit, even under all the difficulties, delays, and taxes imposed upon them by the Company:—that the private trade has continued to increase, although fettered with many restrictions; but that these restrictions deter people, unacquainted with India, and residing at home, from engaging in the trade:—that a free trade to the East would be a measure admirably calculated for removing present evils, would be a substitute for the loss of European commerce, an equivalent for all other markets, and would necessarily open new and extensive markets; a field greater than any other country offers, and beyond the grasp of the enemy; a field to British skill, industry, and enterprize, and to capital, otherwise useless, whilst the national resources are stunted:—that thousands, who are now reduced to idleness and poverty, might be actively engaged:—that the capital, spirit, and *knowledge* of British merchants, are unbounded:—that a free trade to India would turn the wealth acquired by the foreign merchant into the pockets of the subjects of this country; would excite a fair emulation to bring all the produce of the East to its proper level in the home market, to the great benefit of this

country; would enable our manufacturers, with more advantage, to exert their skill and industry to produce new articles of trade, and to give full employment to the operative classes of the community: would circulate the trade, now confined to London, through every part of the United Kingdom; would be the means of increasing our maritime strength, our financial resources, and the wealth and glory of the British Empire. Such is the general tenor of the petitions on this head; but the language of the one from Sheffield is so animated and sanguine, that it may not be improper to transcribe a part of it.

“ The petitioners are fully persuaded, if the trade
“ to the East Indies were thrown open to all His
“ Majesty’s subjects, such new and abundant mar-
“ kets, would be discovered and established, as
“ would enable them to set at defiance every ef-
“ fort to injure them, by that sworn enemy to
“ their prosperity and the peace of Europe, the
“ present unprincipled ruler of France; and that
“ the petitioners doubt not, if the trade of this
“ United Kingdom were permitted to flow unim-
“ peded over those extensive, luxuriant, and opu-
“ lent regions, though it might, in the outset, like
“ a torrent repress and swoln by obstruction, when
“ its sluices were first opened, break forth with
“ uncontrollable impetuosity, deluging, instead
“ of supplying the district before it, yet that very
“ violence, which, at the beginning, might be
“ partially injurious, would, in the issue, prove
“ highly and permanently beneficial; no part be-
“ ing unvisited, the waters of commerce, that
“ spread over the face of the land, as they sub-
“ sided, would wear themselves channels, through
“ which they might continue to flow ever after-
“ wards, in regular and fertilizing streams; and
“ that, to the wealthy, enterprizing, honorable,
“ and indefatigable British merchant, conducting
“ in person his own concerns, no obstacle would
“ prove insurmountable, no prejudice invincible,
“ no difficulty disheartening: wants, where he

“found them, he would supply; where they did not exist, he would create them, by affording the means of gratification.”

9th. That the imagined hardship of depriving the Company of the only lucrative branch of their trade, that to China, will be alleviated, by the wealth, influence, knowledge, and experience, which, in their united capacity, they will still be enabled to oppose to the unassisted efforts of private merchants;—that if, indeed, the Company can carry on trade to greater advantage than the private merchant, they have nothing to fear; they will reap their merited reward by the benefit of competition; and without competition, neither would commerce have risen to its present standard, nor will it increase to bear the increasing expences of the nation:—And with respect to the danger of excessive speculation, it is said by Glasgow to be imaginary, because the enterprize of individuals is uniformly limited by their means and success; because any evil of this nature is temporary, and checks itself; and that, *the very worst that can occur, in the event of the abandonment of the trade by the public, would be, that matters would again return to their present state.* On all the grounds, therefore, stated in the petitions, they in general require a full and entire freedom of trade to the Eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, including China, and all the countries within the Charter of the East India Company: and, for the means of indemnifying or remunerating the claims of the Company, one petition proposes, “*a fair and equal impost on the trade in question.*”

Your Committee having thus submitted an abstract, under different heads, of the contents of the petitions, in which abstract, they are persuaded, nothing material is omitted, will now proceed to offer some observations on each of those heads.

And first,—With regard to the doctrine of monopolies in general, your Committee do not conceive, that they are much called upon to enter into any discussion

of it; because, what is termed the monopoly of the East India Company is, as it now exists and has long existed, an institution of a singular nature, formed upon principles peculiar to itself, not merely or chiefly for the purposes of trade, and must be examined with reference to the ends of its institution, and the importance of those ends, which will be the subject of the next article. In the mean time, it may be observed upon this first head, that the ablest writers on political economy, and the most strenuous against monopolies, have not condemned them simply and universally, as most of the petitions now in question do. Even Dr. Adam Smith acquiesces in the establishment of the chartered Banks of England and Scotland, which are species of monopoly; and he praises the Act of Navigation, which is founded on the principle of exclusive privilege. He admits, also, the propriety of a temporary monopoly of new machines and new books; and what is more immediately to the present purpose, he grants, in agreement with Montesquieu and others, as some of the petitioners seem also candidly to allow, that "when a company of merchants (to use his own words) undertake at their own risk and expense, to establish a new trade with some remote and barbarous nation, it may not be unreasonable to incorporate them into a joint stock company, and to grant them a monopoly, in case of their success, for a certain number of years. It is the easiest and most natural way in which a State can recompence them for hazarding a dangerous and expensive experiment, of which the public is afterwards to reap the benefit." But, even in this proposition, it may be observed, that the interests of the two parties, the company of merchants and the public, seem scarcely to be equally cared for. The privilege given by the State is a privilege for its own benefit, which is to cost it nothing, should the experiment fail: and of which it is to enjoy the permanent advantage, if the experiment succeed. It is safe from loss; and besides its share of what present advantage there may be, is to have ultimately the fee-simple of all the gain that may result. Undoubtedly, in this case,

the terms of enjoyment by the merchants, after all the season of hazard and vicissitude is past, should be ample; and it were to be wished, that those who are now so eager to take gratuitous possession of all the commercial establishments, formed at such immense risks and expence by the East-India Company, would consider more equitably than the language of their petition does, the fair claims of a body, even if regarded merely in a commercial light, who have hitherto been working through a long series of time, of difficulties, and dangers, to the vast benefit of the nation, whilst their own fair compensation yet remains to be obtained.

Secondly.—With respect to that species of exclusive privilege, called the East-India Company's monopoly, your Committee cannot begin their remarks upon the accusations brought against it, without lamenting the surprising want of information which the generality of the petitioners discover, relative to the Company's system, conduct, and affairs; and, your Committee are compelled to add, a mortifying defect of attention, also, regarding things that could not possibly be unknown to the petitioners. They treat the whole question of the *monopoly*, as if it were purely a commercial question; as if it involved no higher question of policy; as if it stood unconnected with the acquisition, the government, and the preservation of a great Indian empire; and as if, from its political relations, the question concerning it had no bearing on the British constitution. Thus, say some of the petitioners, “the reasonings in favour of the monopoly proceed from narrow, partial views, demonstrated to be fallacious, and which will apply equally to every other branch of British commerce;” whereas it is abundantly obvious, that the exclusive commercial privileges enjoyed by the Company in the Indian trade (however well entitled they are to them on other accounts), are contended for by them, and have been continued by the Legislature, mainly because deemed to be necessary for the political government of India, and not at all on account of any pecuniary participation, which one of the

petitions erroneously assumes to be now in question. The same cause, also, was understood to require the continuance of the China monopoly, though that privilege stands upon other irrefragable grounds, as the unlimited admission of British ships into any quarter of the Eastern Seas could not be thought compatible with the system adopted for the security of our eastern territorial possessions. The commercial monopoly therefore is, in a word, an instrument in the hands of the Company, for the political government of India. Such, it has been maintained by them, and admitted by Ministers, in the discussions respecting the Charter, to be ; but this great truth, either as a fact or as a principle, is unnoticed in the petitions. Some of the petitioners are, indeed, so just as to recollect, that the India Company have territorial rights, and to say that it is not their wish to trench on them ; but they do not seem to be aware, that those rights can be enjoyed only through the medium of commercial privileges, or that any provision can be made for securing them, compatibly with their own claims for an universal opening of the Eastern trade. The petitioners proceed, not only as if the renewal of the privileges in the Indian trade were merely a question of commerce, but as if it were a question of strict monopoly, such as was agitated in King William's time. To the admission given to private merchants into the Indian trade by the act of 1793, enlarged by the arrangement of 1802, and in practice occasionally still further extended (not to speak of the considerable privileges enjoyed by the commanders and officers of the Company's ships), the petitioners do not advert, except to blame the Company for the alleged inefficiency of all those concessions, which, in reality, greatly relaxed the monopoly, and made it what the late Lord Melville called a regulated, or qualified monopoly. In thus censuring the Company, the petitioners resort to some representations formerly brought against them, and sufficiently answered on their part ; except in respect to the irregular dispatch of the extra ships from India, a matter originating with the governments there from the political circumstances of the times ; but that contro-

versy is now past, and quite irrelevant to the present state of things; for another point to be held up to particular attention is, that the Company have lately acquiesced in vastly larger concessions, that is, in a general trade between the United Kingdom and India, through the port of London. Yet this new and great change in the Indian system, the petitioners too generally overlook. That it has ever attracted their notice, is only to be inferred from their contending, that the trade shall be general to all the ports of the kingdom; but in their attacks upon the Company, they act as if the whole original structure of the monopoly were still standing and obstinately defended, and when the Company acquiesce in large relaxations, the petitioners nevertheless persist in charging them with all the evils of the most rigid monopoly, for the purpose, as it would seem, of aggravating the case against the Company in the eyes of Parliament and of the public, and strengthening the prejudices, which so much pains have been taken to diffuse. Thus the political part of the Company's system, and its intimate connection with the commerce, is left entirely out of sight; and the present state of the Company's commercial privileges is not accurately represented, nor the actual state of the question, concerning the future measure of those privileges, fairly brought into view.

But it ought to be again and again pressed upon the public attention, that the first and great object, in any new arrangement for India, is not commercial, but political; and that the safe and beneficial administration of that empire is a consideration paramount to all others. No one has denied, either that the Company have conducted, and do conduct the administration, to the great improvement of the security and happiness of the vast population that empire contains; or that the government of it should remain with them, and consequently that the means requisite to enable them to continue to execute so great a trust, should also be afforded. The nature and extent of those means form, therefore, the precise question now at issue: but on this important point, as has been already intimated, the petitions in

general are quite silent, and the propositions contained in them go to deprive the Company wholly of those means, particularly the monopoly of the China trade, the reasons for continuing which will be explained in a subsequent head.

With regard to the effects of the monopoly on the manufactures, trade, and other interests of this country, if any thing said in these days to the discredit of the Company would occasion surprise, it would be the representations given in the petitions on that head. The Company are accused of obstructing the export of the manufactures of this country, even by some (with an honourable exception of the rest) of those woollen manufacturers, who have owed their chief employment to the Company's commissions, continued for the benefit of the nation, under a certainty of deriving no profit from the exported article.

Of those "undeniable documents," by which one of the petitions, in an authoritative style, affirms, "it is proved, that if the trade be allowed to remain under its present restrictions, it will languish, decay, and pass into the hands of other states; that the monopoly must, if continued, *diminish* the resources of private wealth and of national revenue;" your Committee have never heard, and they cannot conceive, that any such documents exist. It is more probable, that the petitioners have put their own sense upon the statements of the Company, which furnish the most authentic materials in this case, and if fairly examined, with a reference to other relative circumstances, will lead to conclusions directly opposite. The subject of the American trade to India, which seems chiefly alluded to, will be discussed in the sequel. That trade, as will hereafter more fully appear, has owed its increase essentially to the state of war, in which this nation has been placed for a long series of years past. If the American trade with India were still going on, a much easier and juster remedy for the alleged evils of it could be found, than the extinction of the Company's remaining commercial privileges. But these heavy forebodings are pronounced, when America, and every

European nation (the distressed one of Portugal excepted) are actually wholly excluded from the Indian Seas.

There seems to be a general and deplorable delusion, respecting the practicability of a vast extension of the sale of the manufactures of this country in India and China, and of the productions of those countries here. This question will be the immediate object of a following article; but your Committee may, in the mean time, confidently say, that the Company have, in a long course of years, made more numerous, persevering, costly experiments, in attempting to push the vent of British commodities, particularly woollens and metals, in the east, than the means, the resources, the safety of private merchants, are likely to enable them to make. The Correspondence of the Company with their servants abroad, at different periods, on this interesting concern, would fill many volumes. That the East-India Company, far from impeding the prosperity of the country, as the petitions, in opposition to history and experience, allege, have, by means of their monopoly, essentially, contributed to its wealth and its greatness, it will be much more easy to shew than to discover, accurately, where the limit of the advantages resulting from their institution is to be fixed. They gave a very early impulse to the manufactures and trade of this country. They opened a new commerce, not with the East only, but, by means of their returns from thence, with foreign Europe. They soon increased the ship-building, and improved the navigation of the kingdom; both which they have in latter times, carried to a degree of advancement, that has made their fleets serviceable in the wars of the nation, and the commanders successful, in adding to the naval glory of their country. Against the jealous rivalry of the Portuguese and Dutch, they, through a long course of hostilities from a superior force, maintained for this nation a share in the Indian trade; they preserved it from being totally lost, amidst all the convulsions of the civil wars; they outlived even the more dangerous innovations of subsequent periods; they upheld in India, the national in-

terests, against the ambitious designs of European enemies, and the despotic violence of native powers; and, in a long and arduous struggle, maintained, with little exception, at their own expence, they acquired a territorial empire for the mother country, which exalted its rank in the scale of nations. They have, since, expelled every European nation, except our ally of Portugal, from the Indian Continent and Ocean; and they have given a better government, to an immensely extended empire, than the East ever saw before.

In all this progress, not the ability and wisdom of their civil servants only have been conspicuous, but the talents and valour of their military officers have signally added to the glory and renown of the British nation. By those officers a grand army has been formed of native troops, in discipline, attachment, and efficiency, a just subject of admiration; and from the time of the first Clive downward, the exploits performed by the Company's military servants in India equal, in brilliancy, those recorded in any period of modern history.

To all these public benefits is to be added the direct wealth, with which the Company have been the means of enriching the nation. The amount of these contributions, consisting in the profits of manufacturers, ship-builders and tradesmen, ship-owners and officers, servants and labourers, miners, re-exporters of Eastern productions to foreign parts, and other descriptions of persons gaining by the Company's trade, in dividends to proprietors, payments to Government, and the influx of private fortunes acquired in India, especially in the last fifty-five years, may perhaps be moderately estimated at one hundred millions sterling. Such are the injuries, the grievances, the evils,—such the degradation, which the East-India Company have brought on the country!

Thirdly.—The charges under the third head are nothing more than groundless accusations, calculated to render the Company unpopular; and, except the first article, which is new, have been often answered. As to this article, it is not true that, on the whole, the

Company's imports have decreased, although the sales have, in some years, fallen off, by the exclusion of British commodities from the European Continent; an evil common to all the merchants of this country, but now the occasion of a charge against the Company. And what virtue can the expulsion of enemies and rivals from the Indian Seas have to increase trade, if, when merchandize is brought to Europe, there is only a tardy and diminished sale for it? Again, is it a thing of course, that recently acquired provinces, impoverished, unsettled, containing a people every way dissimilar to us, should purchase our commodities, when the inhabitants of other parts of Hindostan, where we have been settled for ages, have still so little relish for them? The stipulation in the Act of 1793, for a pecuniary participation by the Public, was a conditional stipulation, depending on a contingency, which has never become a reality, but in one year, that immediately following the last renewal of the Charter. The long war, in which, with hardly any intermission, this country has been engaged, ever since 1793, has, by increasing the Company's expences, beyond the most extravagant supposition that could have been previously formed on that head, absorbed all the expected sources of accumulation. Of this, every Administration since 1794 has been sensible; but the same utterly groundless charge continues to be repeated. This "promised participation," say some of the petitions, "has been converted by the Company into repeated claims on the public purse and credit for enormous sums, to support their establishments:" a most unfounded statement. The Company have never had occasion to apply for aid to support their establishments; their applications to Parliament have either been in consequence of levies by Government on the score of participation in the territorial revenues, or for reimbursement of immense sums expended for the State in military expeditions, sums very tardily acknowledged, and not yet fully paid: or to enable the Company to meet the transfer of Indian territorial debt to this country; a debt not in-

creased by their order, or according to their wish, though the petitions charge the increase to them, but sanctioned by His Majesty's Government and by Parliament; a debt, which, every intelligent person knows, it never was, or can be possible, in the nature of things, to discharge out of the Company's commercial funds, and therefore most unjustly made a ground of accusation against them.

Fourthly.—The claim to a full and free trade, as the right, by birth and inheritance, of every subject of this realm, and the arguments in favor of extending it to the Outports, are contained under the fourth head.

With regard to the general position on which the arguments are founded, little need be said. It is an obvious principle, that men, living in society, must submit to the laws of the society, and to restraints upon their natural liberty, when the public interest, in the opinion of the legislative authority, requires it. The Indian monopoly was at first established, because it was thought beneficial to the commercial interests of the country. It was long continued on the same principle; now it is more a political than a commercial question. It may be stated thus: Whether it be more for the interest of the nation, to maintain the Indian empire under the system which has hitherto preserved and improved it,—a system greatly relaxed as to the trade with India, and which has also preserved a lucrative commercial intercourse with China,—or to adopt a system of entirely free commercial communication with both countries, at the hazard of losing that empire and the China trade, or of rendering the tranquillity and retention of the one, and the enjoyment of the other, less secure? Until this question, or one reduced to still lower terms, namely, Whether it would be prudent, for the sake of the object in view, to run any hazard, where the stake is so great? is solved in favor of an open trade, the plea of natural inherent right has no title to be heard. No such solution has yet been produced. It has, on the contrary, been shewn, that dangers and disadvantages, both in the East and at home, would attend the opening of the

trade ; but it has not been shown, that any measures, which have been suggested as preventives, would be at all effectual. No adequate provision, therefore, against those dangers and disadvantages is yet proposed ; hence, it may fairly be presumed, none has been found. But, until such a remedy is discovered, the present system ought not to be overturned. The opening of the Outports would, according to the unanswered reasonings of the Court, have this effect. The opening of a part of the Outports would lead to the same effect, though perhaps by a somewhat slower progress ; for it would immediately reduce and derange the periodical public sales of the Company, which is the master-wheel in the mechanism of their import trade. His Majesty's Ministers, in not proposing to open all the Outports, both admit the contingency of danger from such a measure, and set aside the argument of universal inherent right : but it remains utterly unproved, that danger would not result from opening even a few Outports, especially if the export trade is allowed to all ; and that, after any had been so privileged, which would be in effect a monopoly against the rest, those others would ever be quiet, until they also were admitted : so that the whole of the danger will follow from the first step, and ought to be contemplated accordingly. It may just be observed, that the quality ascribed to certain countries, as giving the petitioners more particularly a right to a free trade with them, the quality of having been " acquired " and maintained by the efforts and valour of the " forces of His Majesty," properly appertains neither to Hindostan nor to China, and that the territories held by the Company were acquired under extensive powers and privileges received from the Legislature.

Upon the same ground of natural inherent right, and of the necessity of the exercise of that right, as essential to the maintenance of the manufactures and commercial prosperity of the country, is placed the claim of the Outports to a free importation of goods from India and China. Under the fourth head, therefore, your Committee have collected the strength of

the arguments contained in the petitions in support of this claim; arguments to which the President of the India Board was pleased to refer the Court. The argument of inherent right has been already considered: the other arguments, which may be given in the words of the Glasgow petition, are, "that the confinement of the Indian imports to the port of London would be unnecessary, impolitic, and unjust:—unnecessary, because, first, the ideal difficulty of collecting the taxes is fully obviated, by the known safety with which the duties are levied on articles of West-Indian and American produce; and secondly, because the duties may be collected with greater ease, and less loss from pilferage, in the Outports; unjust, because every mercantile place in the kingdom is entitled to the same privileges; and impolitic, because the superior economy and dispatch that prevail at the Outports, are requisite to secure an equality with foreign nations."

On the second of these three arguments it may be observed, that the claim of all the Outports to a participation in the Indian trade, as matter of equal right, stands upon the same principle as the claim of all individuals, which has just been considered, and must be determined in the same way and order; it therefore demands no farther notice here. If it shall be judged, that no larger interest than that of the Outports opposes their claim, then, and then only, will it be entitled to attention.

The first argument is, the known safety, and greater facility, with which duties are collected at the Outports. Whether that facility be, in fact, greater or not, it is needless to examine. If it were indeed so, it would still leave undecided a much more important question,—the danger of smuggling. On that danger the Court have enlarged, in their letters to the President of the India Board, of 13th January 1809, and 15th and 29th April 1812. Your Committee cannot but hope, that these letters will be perused by Members of Parliament, as their contents are material to a just consideration of the subject. The Court have respect-

between the collection of duties at the Outports and the danger of smuggling.

fully stated to Lord Buckinghamshire, that no adequate answer has been given to these letters: his Lordship, in addition to what he has himself said, has referred the Court to the petitions. The argument just quoted is the most direct, and indeed the only one to the point, which your Committee have discovered in all the petitions. But it does not meet the main objections of the Court, taken from the dangers of smuggling: they remain untouched and unnoticed. Those dangers were contemplated, upon the supposition that only the opening of the Indian trade was in question; and in this way your Committee will now consider them, reserving to a future article some remarks on the still greater danger of smuggling which would follow, if the China monopoly were abolished, and which would be experienced, whilst our merchants were permitted to visit China at all. It is, from the facilities of smuggling tea, that ships cleared out for, or from India, would find in the Eastern Islands, in the voyage home, and on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, that the Court have apprehended the chief dangers would arise. In the Eastern Islands there are no custom-houses, clearances, manifests. There are great ranges of coasts in the remoter parts of the United Kingdom where there is no custom-house: bulk might be broken, and no detection follow where the ship should afterwards be regularly entered. It does not in the least follow, that these evils might not happen, though it should be true, that the taxes on West-Indian and American commodities are safely collected; for these commodities come generally in very large unwieldy casks or packages, are, in proportion to their bulk, of much less value than tea, which is also packed in small portable cases, and they come from countries abounding with regular custom-houses, whence they cannot sail without manifests and clearances: yet, with all these safeguards, your Committee are credibly informed, that the Americans find means to smuggle tea into this country. But, even supposing ships came direct to an Outport, without having broken bulk, what comparison is there between the collection of duties at any port, provin-

cial or metropolitan, and the collection of tea duties with perfect certainty, facility, and a very trifling expence, at the India-House? The objections stated at large in the Court's letters, your Committee beg leave to repeat, remain without any sound answer; and it is extremely material to observe, that the opinions maintained in them, on this subject, are corroborated, by the reports which the Boards of Customs and Excise have made to His Majesty's Ministers, respecting the danger that would arise to the revenue, from the adoption of the new system: a danger which, in their judgment, would be inevitable.

The third argument urged in their petitions is taken from the necessity of securing an equality with foreign nations, which, it is said, the superior economy and dispatch at the Outports will do. If this alleged advantage of the Outports were admitted, it would, in the opinion of your Committee, weigh but little in the general question. The difference cannot be material in itself, and its effect little, in a trade so unlikely to become of any magnitude.

There are, however, other considerations of great weight belonging to the question of opening the Outports, to which the petitions do not advert. One of these is, the immense interests which the port of London, with all its descriptions of merchants, tradesmen, tea-dealers, factors, brokers, dyers, packers, callenders, inspectors, labourers, ship-builders, ship-chandlers, rope-makers, ship-owners, mariners, and all their train of establishments, warehouses, wharfs, docks, yards, premises, shipping formed in the course of two centuries, in which the Company's privilege, and the law of the land, have made the metropolis the sole seat of the Eastern commerce: all these interests, with the Corporation of London, have represented to Parliament, the ruin in which they would be involved by the opening of the trade to the Outports. The Company's periodical public sales, on which so much of the order and success of their business depend, would be interfered with, and their very large property in warehouses and other buildings deteriorated;

in short, all the institutions, public and private, of the capital, for carrying on the eastern trade, would be shattered or broken down. The removal of the trade would effect this, although the new speculations and enterprises would establish nothing equivalent in other places; far less compensate the losses of the supplanted parties. Your Committee cannot go into this subject, sufficiently, to give a just sense of the magnitude and importance of it; but they may seriously ask,—Is the case equal between the people of London and those of the Outports? Would it be right to expose to privation and ruin one set, by withdrawing from them what they have long enjoyed, in order to add to the comfortable provision the other set already possess; and this only to save them the slight inconvenience of bringing their Indian imports to the port of London?

Let it never be forgotten, too, that the Indian people are concerned in this question. The Court have already, in their letters to Lord Melville and Lord Buckinghamshire, stated their apprehensions, that the opening of the Outports to imports from India might increase the resort of European adventurers to India. It has been advanced, in return, from some quarters, that the police of India is so excellent, as to obviate every danger of this kind. Your Committee are sorry to observe that they find in the records of the Bengal Government, informations concerning the police, which do not warrant them to conclude quite so favourably of it; for, in fact, with all the progressive improvements in the system of the government there, they have not yet been able to bring the police into a state of perfect efficiency. The Fifth Report of the Committee of the House of Commons has entered much into this subject, and one quotation from the conclusion of it may suffice to justify this observation. “It does not, therefore, appear to have been from any want of information, in regard to the imperfect state of the police, that the Government was unable to prevent its becoming worse, but rather, as your Committee should suppose, from the difficulties which pre-

“ sented themselves to the application of an efficacious
“ remedy.”

Fifthly,—on the China monopoly. Besides the connection already noticed of the China monopoly with the policy of our Indian system, the uniting of this trade under one head is necessary, both on account of the extreme caution required in the conduct of our intercourse with so jealous and inflexible a government as the Chinese, and of the security of the large revenue derived by the British public from this branch of commerce. The habits of the Chinese nation are known to be as fixed as they are peculiar. Their government is a pure despotism, jealous of the smallest tendency to insubordination or innovation; the people are guided by a principle of implicit submission to their superiors; and both government and people hold all disorderly conduct in the utmost abhorrence. Foreign trade is held in low estimation, and the commerce which Europeans have been permitted to carry on is subjected to manifold and rigorous restrictions, intended to prevent the intermixture of strangers with the natives, and to guard against their entrance into the interior of the country, and the hazard of their becoming, in any way, troublesome to the government. The ships of European nations are allowed to resort to only one port in an empire of so vast extent; and there, even, no stranger is permitted a constant residence, without credentials from the sovereign of the state to which he belongs. When a factory is established, for which one spot is fixed, the factors are confined to very narrow precincts around it; they dare not make an excursion beyond those precincts into the open fields, nor enter into the closely adjoining city of Canton. The government of China does not allow to its own subjects freedom of trade, or unrestrained intercourse with foreigners:—both are interdicted; and the restrictions imposed, together with the sumptuary laws in force, oppose the strongest obstacles to any great extension of the sale of our manufactures among the Chinese. The trade with Europeans is given in monopoly to a company of

ten or twelve Chinese merchants, styled the Hong; and these merchants become responsible to the government for the conduct of the foreigners with whom they deal. After the ships are dispatched for the season, the factors are obliged to withdraw to the island of Macao, a low Portuguese settlement, till the ships of next year arrive. And, with respect to the ships, they are, whilst in harbour, under the controul of the Chinese officers, who are empowered by law to take the custody of their guns:—and if, in the intercourses, and consequent frays, between the natives and our English sailors, one of the former happens to meet his death, *by accident*, from an unknown hand, it may produce the most serious consequences; for the Chinese government has been known, in such a case, to claim the life of an European in expiation, and for an occurrence like this the Company's establishment is held responsible, and their trade liable to be stopped. With a government so absolute, in requiring implicit conformity to its peculiar laws and usages, and so marked with pride, suspicion, and despotism, British subjects have the utmost difficulty to act; and the Company's agents frequently submit to caprices and humiliations, to which the honour of a sovereign would not allow any representative of his to yield. Is it, therefore, in the least probable, that the Chinese would tolerate the indiscriminate ingress of numberless unconnected, unaccredited Europeans? or, if they did give them admission, that their multiplied, irregular, desultory visits and intercourses with the natives, would not be attended with disorders, with violations of Chinese usages, (with smuggling, for instance, a high offence in China), which would soon end in the utter expulsion and exclusion of these strangers, or in such injustice and humiliating punishments, on the part of the Chinese government, as might call on the honour of this country to demand redress? The splendid embassy which His Majesty sent by Lord Macartney to the Emperor of China had, with all its imposing, attendant circumstances, and all the skilful address of that nobleman, no influence to induce the Chinese government to relax from their rigid restric-

tions on the commerce and intercourse of British subjects with its territories; and it may be safely concluded, that all which that government must have since heard, respecting the revolutions in Europe, will make it adhere still more obstinately to its jealous precautionary system. To all these probable dangers, the petitioners oppose nothing but the honourable character of Britons, and the example of the American adventurers to China. —Frail dependence! British sailors carry to every shore their habits of excess, as is too often found in the Company's ships, notwithstanding the strict discipline established in them. The American seamen are a much more sober and quiet class of people, and the adventurers of that nation have derived in China a sanction from the pre-establishment and credit of the English factory, to which, from their language and manners, they appeared to be related. It is, indeed, by the prudent, respectable conduct of the Company's representatives there, in the management of their own trust, and the controul exercised by them over other British subjects; it is by this means, and by the extent and regularity of the Company's dealings; by their probity, now so famed, as to pass the bales which have their mark, without inspection, through the Chinese empire, that this jealous and supercilious people have been at length greatly conciliated:—but the Company's establishment could not, on the principles now proposed, retain either its credit or position. To expose a trade of such value and importance to the nation and the revenue, to hazards so great; to break down the present system, with the immense establishments and property connected with it, particularly the China fleet of the Company—a thing unparalleled in the commercial annals of the world,—would, therefore, in every view, commercial, financial, and political, be utterly unwise; and if this desperate risk were run, further evils would await the new system at home. Upon the supposition of a general resort of British ships to China, how would it be possible to prevent the smuggling of tea on the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, with the facility which exists of receiving that article

on board in many of the Eastern Islands, where there are no custom-houses, and with the temptation of evading a duty of ninety-five per cent at home? The petitions offer not the least satisfaction on this point; a point highly interesting, as has already appeared, if the question were only about opening the Indian trade to the Outports; but yet more interesting, in respect to the proposal for laying open the China trade, which is, at the best, a proposal to incur the most imminent risk of losing that trade, and the great revenue arising from it, merely in order to change the hands through which it shall pass; for supposing it to be preserved to the nation, there is no reasonable ground to think that it could be increased, because the Chinese now *take our woollens only in barter* for tea, and the present importations of tea are as large as the country requires.

Sixthly,—On the complaints of the superior advantages enjoyed by neutrals, particularly the Americans, in the Indian trade. The vessels of the American States first appeared in the Indian Seas about the year 1785. At that time several European nations possessed settlements on the continent of India, in virtue of grants from the native sovereigns, recognised by this country, after the Company obtained territorial dominion. It had not then been disputed, that those settlements might receive other European flags as well as their own (though the Company have, within these few years, properly held, that the original grant gave a right of trade only for the ships of the nation to whom the grant was made); therefore the Bengal Government thought it politic to admit the American ships into the British ports, rather than oblige them, by refusal, to carry their custom to the French, Dutch, and Danes. This was, however, merely a gratuitous licence, revokable at pleasure. But, in 1794, the Government of this country, induced by the political circumstances of the time, gave to the United States, by treaty, a right to a direct trade between their own ports and those of British India, on the terms of the most favoured nation: and, in 1797, the privilege of free ingress to the British ports in India was conferred on all

friendly nations. By the long continuance of the war which followed the French revolution, these concessions proved of unforeseen high advantage to the subjects of the American States. The settlements on the Indian continent, of the French, and of the Dutch and Danes, who had fallen under French influence, were successively captured by the English. The Portuguese and Americans were then the only neutrals who frequented the Indian Seas: and the troubles of Portugal at length left the neutral trade very much in the hands of the Americans, who succeeded, in effect, to the excluded traders of foreign Europe, and supplied their wants, as well as those of the increasing population of the United States and the demands of Spanish America. The subjects of those states, undoubtedly, abused the privileges conceded to them by His Majesty Government, in the Indian trade. They were, by treaty, restricted to a direct trade between America and India; but they visited the ports of foreign Europe, going and returning, and became the general carriers. They even supplied our own West Indian and North American colonies with eastern commodities, and they entered actively into the China trade, deriving a facility of admission there from being viewed as a cast of Englishmen; perhaps also a sanction, from the countenance of the British establishment there.

For several years after the appearance of the Americans in the Indian Seas, they were, no doubt, assisted by British capital; partly by that which wanted a remittance to Europe, but to no very great amount. They exported from Bengal in ten years, through which their trade, on the whole, was considerably progressive, and which ended with 1804-5, goods to the amount of Sicca Rupees 2,71,50,029 (£4,643,575), or £464,357 per annum; and they imported to the amount of Sicca Rupees 3,12,48,544 (£3,906,068), or £390,606 per annum. The excess of exports above the imports, being in ten years £737,507, or £73,750 per annum, may be supposed to be the property of British residents in Bengal remitted by the way of America. Whether they were furnished with British capital from

London, and to what amount, it is difficult to ascertain; but it appears evident, that as they proceeded in the trade, their imports to Bengal more nearly equalled their exports, which shews they were better able to do without Indo-British assistance, and probably it was the same as to European assistance.* Upon this trade, however offensive to our private merchants, and in some views also, to the Company, it may be justly observed, that it was favorable to British India. It carried seasonable and large supplies of bullion to that country from year to year, not above a seventh of its imports being in goods, and these chiefly wines and other articles for the consumption of Europeans. It also carried the commodities of India to foreign Europe, to Spanish America, and other places to which British ships, on account of the war, could have no access; and when, by the policy and increasing power of Bonaparte, the produce of this country and its colonies were nearly shut out from the Continent, the Americans still continued to introduce the commodities of India there, and with the returns of their adventurers they probably purchased English manufactures to carry to the American continent: so that this country, also, eventually benefited by their Indian trade. And however much their large participation of that trade became a matter of complaint among English merchants connected with India, it is certain, that whilst we were engaged in war with almost all Europe, those merchants could not, even by circuitous means, have oc-

* Other averages of the American trade with India, from statements before your Committee, may also be here noted.

In Six Years, from 1802-3
to 1807-8.

	<i>Goods.</i>	<i>Bullion.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Imports into all India.....	£957,224	£6,528,250	£7,487,524
Exports ditto.....	6,901,269	25,696	6,926,965

In Three Years, from 1808-9
to 1810-11.

Imports into all India.....	351,602	4,531,233	4,882,836
Exports ditto.....	5,107,818	9,625	5,117,443

cupied the place which the Americans filled in the Indian commerce: of which position no other proof is necessary, than the frequent want of sales for the goods, public and private, actually brought into the India House, during the period in question. The great progress and profit made by the Americans in the Indian trade, therefore, proceed essentially, not from their activity, or the advantage of individual enterprise, but from their neutral character, which besides giving them access to countries from which belligerents are shut out, enables them to navigate more cheaply, easily, and expeditiously: and it may be taken as a certainty, that whenever war ceases, all their advantages will cease with it, and their power of entering into competition with us, in the trade of their own settlements, be very greatly reduced. The cry that has been raised, and continued against the Company, on this account, confessedly with the view of obtaining a general admission of Indian ships into England, is therefore altogether unfair. If a circuitous trade in Indian commodities, from Britain to foreign parts, has been prevented by the rivalship of the Americans, the Company have suffered as well as individuals; they have suffered, also, by the smuggling of eastern articles from America into our West Indian and North American colonies. They were anxious to check the abuses of the treaty of 1794, and when it expired, they obtained the consent of His Majesty's ministers to impose a double duty on the neutral trade with India, which then applied almost solely to the Americans; but, if the complaints against the rivalship of the Americans in the Indian trade had been well founded, what was the natural and proper remedy? Was it, that the Company, part of whose own trade had, during the war, passed into American hands, should sacrifice the rest of their exclusive privileges, and by the extinction of them, endanger the territorial possessions? Or was it not, obviously, that the Americans should be excluded from a trade, supposed to be carried on at the expence of Great Britain? Yet this cry is still unaccountably kept up, even when we are at war with

America, and the flag of the United States dares not be seen in the Indian Seas! Nay, it is kept up to injure the cause of the Company, after they have actually agreed on enlargements of the trade to England, greater than ever were contemplated, even by the private merchants of India, before the present negotiation; and, if enlargements could effect the object, more than sufficient to bring the whole Indian trade of the Americans to the port of London.

It is singular, that the party who complains of the large share that has been engrossed by the Americans of the Indian trade, should be the same party who complain, also, of the large share which the Americans, in a state of neutrality, enjoyed of the British trade between Great Britain and foreign nations. It is well known, that previously to the rupture between England and the United States, it was urged as a grievance, that though America exported from this country to the amount of twelve millions sterling annually, the country was *not* benefited to the utmost possible extent from this export trade, because the British merchants and manufacturers were, by the intervention of America, deprived of the carrying, and of the second selling profit upon the manufactures. America, it was alledged, bought from us to a great extent, and Great Britain was, to a certain degree, a gainer, to the extent of the American purchases; but, because America sold our goods at second hand (to the Spanish Americans for example) it has been alledged, that had it not been for the intervention of the North American States, *we* should have supplied Spanish America, and, in addition to the profits we have received, would have engrossed all the advantage which has accrued to the merchants of the United States from the carrying and circuitous trade. But may it not, on the other hand, be argued, that if the British manufacturers in an open trade, and during a state of war, have found the assistance of America necessary to the calculation of their own manufactures, the same assistance was wanted by the manufacturers of India to the circulation of their productions: that the large exports from India, as well as the large exports from Great Britain, by the Ameri-

cans, were owing to their neutral character: that if the trade between India and England had been as open as is now contended for, the quantity of Indian goods, circulated through the world, could not have been greater than it has been, under the competition that has actually existed between the merchants of the United States and the East-India Company: and that a greater share in the export trade from India could only have been obtained for the free British traders in one of these ways, either by America abandoning, or Great Britain returning to her pacific relations with other countries. If a free trade has the virtue that is imputed to it, why, under complete freedom of trade, has this country been rendered tributary to America for a vent to the produce of British industry? and, if the pacific relations of states pass for no account in such a question, whence the congratulations we so often hear, upon what we have gained, and may yet gain, by the rupture with America?*

* The following statement, which has been received from an intelligent merchant who resided a number of years in America, shews the advantages under which the trade of that country was carried on in a state of peace.

The advantages which Americans, as ship-owners, enjoyed in a state of neutrality, are obvious, not only from their free communication with belligerents, but from other causes.

Their first rate vessels do not cost one half what those of the same tonnage, built in Britain, generally cost: hence, the capital employed is one half less, and one half the insurance is sufficient to cover the property at stake.

The premium of insurance on an American neutral, from Britain to America, was less than half what was given on an English vessel for the same voyage. On Americans the premium was from two to two and a half per cent., on English vessels from five to six per cent.

The countervailing duties in America, induced shippers always to give a preference to American vessels. Goods arriving in America, paid twelve and a half to fifteen per cent. duties; whilst the same goods, by a British vessel, not only paid the same rate of duty, but an additional ten per cent. on the amount of those duties, which is one and a quarter to one and a half per cent. increased duty.

The freight of goods from America to England, in American bottoms, was never, in the best times, higher than one shilling and sixpence per foot: and many times the whole freight of an homeward-bound American of three hundred tons (that is to say, an American going from this country) could have been had for £300

rope and from North America, its consequent great decline, and the support of the war, require new channels of enterprise, and therefore an open trade.

Every British heart must lament the obstructions to which our commerce has been subjected; must wish for the removal of all continental exclusions, as well as of our differences with America, and that commercial freedom and activity may be restored. It is also extremely desirable, that new sources of trade should be discovered; and natural for those who are now suffering under privations and hardships, to catch eagerly at the flattering prospects and promises, so confidently held out to them from opening the trade with the East. But can the Court of Directors, thoroughly convinced, as they are, that all such expectation are groundless and delusive; that those who should act upon them, if the trade were opened, would be sure to experience ruinous loss and disappointment, and that the abolition of the Company's commercial privileges would be, in effect, the extinction of the whole of the present Indian system: can the Court, with these convictions, lend themselves to promote a dangerous deception, already too prevalent, at the sacrifice of so much individual interest, and of that public interest, the care of which is entrusted to them? If it were, indeed, probable, that by a slow process, the commercial intercourse between this country and the East could be enlarged, the effect would be far too distant to relieve present pressures, and the first adventurers be more likely to plunge the trading world into fresh difficulties, as proved to be the result of the general rush in the trade of Buenos Ayres, where it was easy to send exports, but difficult to find sale or return. It will, perhaps, now be said, that the trade with Buenos Ayres has become a regular one: but it can be a regular one only to a very limited extent, being, indeed, partly what subsisted with Lisbon before it was turned into a different channel; it may not, in a long time, replace the vast sums at first lost there, and, at any rate, it displaced no important system existing before. From the late very favourable change in the affairs of Europe, a better prospect of

relief now appears ; from the East it will be found that no hope of any can be rationally entertained.

Eighthly.—That a free trade to the East would be a substitute and cure for all present commercial evils ; would open an unbounded field to British manufactures, British capital, skill, enterprize, and knowledge, which would not only supply the wants of the vast population of the East, but create wants where they did not exist.

The practicability of extending, in any great degree, the commerce of this country with the natives of the East, in exports and imports, is undoubtedly a vital question in the whole of the discussion respecting the renewal of the Charter : for, if no such extension be indeed practicable, to what end should the present system, with all the establishments which have grown out of it, be destroyed. The British merchants appear to entertain the most extravagant ideas of a new world for commercial enterprise ; ideas upon which they are ready to risk their own property, and to sacrifice all the interests of the existing Indian system. The Company, backed by the great mass of British subjects now in Europe, who are acquainted with the countries of the East, maintain, in direct opposition to all such imaginations, that it is not now possible greatly to extend among the inhabitants of the East the consumption of British productions ; or, in this country, the sale of Asiatic commodities. On the side of the merchants there is, in truth, nothing but a sanguine theory. On the side of the Company there is the experience of all the nations of Europe for three centuries ; there is the testimony of ancient history ; there are the climate, the nature, the usages, tastes, prejudices, religious and political institutions of the Eastern people. If the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, and the account of the first Europeans sent by that route to the shores of India, were only just announced to us, some explanation might be given of the enthusiasm with which the hope of unbounded commerce thither is entertained ; but that, after all the knowledge which successive ages have afforded upon this subject, men of

general intelligence and cultivation should, in opposition to the usual course of human affairs, adopt the fond idea of entering, at once, into the enjoyment of a new world of commerce, is a most striking instance of credulity, and of the power which interest and imagination united have to impose upon the understanding. The theory of Dr. Adam Smith did not anticipate any such sudden burst of new commerce, when he pronounced, that "the East Indies offered a market for the manufactures of Europe, greater, and more extensive, than both Europe and America put together." Eminent as Dr. Smith certainly was in the science of political economy, he was not infallible. His information respecting India was very defective, and erroneous; his prejudices against the East India Company extreme, and his prognostics concerning the Indian government wholly mistaken. In the period which has elapsed, of near forty years, since he first published his work on the *Wealth of Nations*, the endeavours of all Europe and America have made no discovery of that immense market for European manufactures, which, he said, was offered by the East Indies: yet the same doctrine seems to be still in the minds of some of the Petitioners, who make it a serious charge against the Company, that its exports to the immense regions of the East do not amount to a fifth of the exports of this country to North America. But, as well might it be a matter of charge against the merchants of England, that their exports to the great continent of Africa, which contains so many millions of inhabitants, less influenced by religious prejudices, and more inclined, by taste and manners, than the people of the East, to use our productions, do not equal their exports to our remaining American colonies. The reason is obvious in both cases. All the North American colonists are the same people as ourselves, live under a climate nearly similar, and have a variety of commodities, valuable to us, to exchange; the Africans live under a tropical sun, are poor, and have little means of purchasing even such of our manufactures as they would like to use. It has been already noticed, that the Americans

have been in the habit of carrying our commodities into other countries.

A profound observer of human affairs, the President Montesquieu, had, before the time of Dr. Smith, who however overlooks his opinion, reasoned more agreeably to nature and experience on this subject. "Although," says he, "commerce be liable to great revolutions, it may happen that certain physical causes, such as the quality of soil and climate, shall for ever fix its character. In the commerce which we carry on with India in modern times, the export of money thither is indispensable. The Romans carried to India, every year, about fifty millions of *Sesterces*. That money, as ours now is, was exchanged for goods, which they brought back to the West. Every nation which has traded to India has uniformly carried the precious metals thither, and brought back goods in return. Nature herself produces this effect. The Indians have their arts, which are adapted to their manner of life. Our wants are essentially different from theirs; and what is luxury to us, never can be so to them. Their climate neither requires, nor permits the use of almost any of our commodities. Accustomed to go almost naked, the country furnishes them with the scanty raiments they wear; and their religion, to which they are in absolute subjection, instils into them an aversion to that sort of food which we consume: they, therefore, need nothing from us but our metals, which are the signs of value, and for which they give in return the merchandize that their frugality, and the nature of the country, supply in abundance. Ancient authors, who have written upon India, represent the country precisely such as we now find it, as to police, to manners, and to morals. India always has been, and India always will be, what it now is; and those who trade to India will carry money thither and bring none back."

As the Court have, in their letter of the 13th January 1809 to the President of the India Board, given the same views, and in some detail, on this subject, not

deriving their opinion from any single authority, but from the broad page of history and practice, it is unnecessary for your Committee again to enlarge upon it. But may not the attention of the manufacturers of woollens, metals, cotton fabrics, potteries, be still called to the habits of the Indian people, the bulk of whom live all their days upon rice, and go only half covered with a slight cotton cloth; the rice and cotton both produced by their own soil? The earnings of the common labouring classes, and consequently their expenses may be estimated, on an average, not to exceed* £4. 10s. per man per annum. They are indolent by nature, frugal by habit, under manifold religious restrictions:—what demand of the manufactures from Europe is to be expected from these? Of the better classes few are rich, unless those connected with Europeans: and *even these* during a course of near three centuries, in which they have lived in European settlements, have adopted none of our tastes or fashions, unless perhaps in a few articles of jewellery and hardware, looking-glasses, and carriages, with the use of a mantle of broad cloth in the cold season. As to the north of India, though the climate there be less dissimilar to ours, the people are extremely so: and in poor, ill-governed countries, where property is insecure and concealed, what hope can there be of a vent for foreign luxuries? The persons who now imagine that region to present a great field for commerce, have no conception of the difficulty of carrying goods there from the sea; the delays, expense, and insecurity, that must be experienced when the boundaries of the Company's government are passed; and in finding and bringing back returns if the European commodities could be disposed of. With respect

* In a late statistical account of Dinagapore, a province of Bengal, there are statements of the annual expenses of different classes of society, and among them one of the expenses of a labouring man, with a wife and two children. The amount is only Rupees 22.10.11, or near £3 per annum, being at the rate of fifteen shillings per head. The article of clothing for this family of four persons is only six shillings per annum.

to China, it is not denied that it might, in all probability, take off many of our manufactures, if the Chinese government would allow the free dissemination of them. The jealous restrictions of that Government, however, which though they have been already stated, it may be proper to notice again here, prevent their own subjects, in general, from any dealings with Europeans: and it has been seen, that the magnificent style of Lord Macartney's embassy, which bespoke the grandeur of the British sovereign, with the refined diplomatic talents of that nobleman, which even struck the Chinese courtiers, were incapable of moving the Government to depart, in the smallest degree, from its established policy. If, instead of the regulated, long-experienced organ for European trade, the Company's Canton establishment (under whose respectability, in fact, the Americans were admitted), a swarm of unconnected private-traders were to be let loose upon that country, it is altogether probable, that the Chinese would either shut their doors entirely upon, or contract even the present narrow entrance.

If so many proofs of want of knowledge on Indian subjects did not crowd on your Committee, they might express surprize, at finding any persons still so uninformed, as to hold up the trade carried on by individuals, in the time of Cromwell, as gainful to the parties and useful to the nation. The fact is now ascertained to have been notoriously otherwise. The competition of the traders led them to undersell their exports in India and their imports in England. The public, indeed, for a little time, got Indian goods remarkably cheap; but the adventurers could not go on, and Cromwell, induced by the representations made him, in which several of those very adventurers joined, restored the Company, *in order to save the Indian trade to the nation.*

Parliament is now told by the Petitioners, that the private-trade, to which individuals were admitted by the Act of 1793, enlarged by the arrangement of 1802, has succeeded and produced a profit, even whilst the Company have been trading to a loss. The Court

have very substantial reasons to believe, that although some articles of private-trade may, at certain times, have sold to a profit, yet that large importations of other articles, both into India and into England, have repeatedly sold to a loss, or have remained long on hand for want of sale.

The nature of this trade should be considered. The numerous commanders and officers of the Company's ships (a very superior class of nautical men) have no adequate provision from direct pecuniary allowances: their compensation has always been given in the privilege of trade, and a certain allowance of tonnage freight free. This has generally made them traders; and as they are to look to trade for their emolument (for but few, comparatively, make money by passengers) they continue to adventure, though often with little success: and your Committee are assured, that though they pay no freight nor commission, being their own agents, they still find it, on the whole, a precarious unproductive business. Now, if these men do not succeed, it can hardly be expected that those, who have freight and commission to pay, can fare better.

But it will be said, that other individuals do nevertheless embark in this trade. To this it is to be answered, that the manufacturers of indigo in Bengal, an article originally promoted, and always fostered by the Company, generally send their produce to England, and this is a matter of necessity, because the great bulk of the article cannot otherwise be disposed of. Again, there is a certain annual amount of acquisition by Europeans in India; and as this, doubtless a large amount in all, is, in one way or another, to be remitted to England, merchants in India may find their account tolerably well in taking up such money in India, investing it in goods, and granting bills, at a rate favorable to the drawer, payable from the sales in this country. A sort of new transit capital arises in this way every year; and men may be tempted, occasionally, to seek to make an advantage of it, who would not regularly fix a capital of their own in the

trade. There is also a third sort of trade from India, which men of large capital speculate in, when favorable occasions seem to offer; and, in this way, sometimes cotton piece goods, sometimes cotton-wool, sometimes indigo and raw-silk, have been adventured in. But your Committee suppose it to be an undisputed fact, that these larger adventures have repeatedly been attended with heavy losses to individuals; particularly the very great importations of piece-goods, exceeding in value two millions sterling, in 1802: the large importations of cotton, and even of indigo, since that time: and what may be sufficiently decisive on this head is, that very large quantities of those have remained long in the Company's warehouses without a sale, or uncleared after sale. The following abstract account will sufficiently exhibit these facts.

Value of Private Goods from India remaining in the Company's Warehouses.

	SOLD.	UNSOLD.	TOTAL.
On the 1st. Jan.			
1809	£1,576,185	£815,000	£2,391,185
1810	1,370,958	1,057,760	2,428,718
1811	2,513,761	1,005,000	3,518,761
1812	2,547,668	1,002,932	3,550,600
1813	2,411,259	1,008,000	3,419,259

Of the Sold Goods remaining in the Warehouses, 1st. January 1813.

246 bales cotton wool have been	
in warehouse ten years	£2,460
112 do - - - five - - -	1,120
6,600 do - - - four - - -	66,000
30,000 do - - - three - - -	300,000
6,000 do - - - two - - -	58,930
42,958 bales cotton-wool, value	£428,510

					Brought forward £428,510
71 chests of indigo remaining					
	seven years	-	-	-	£4,828
722	do	six	-	-	49,096
424	do	five	-	-	28,832
230	do	four	-	-	15,640
5,121	do	three	-	-	358,228
1,593	do	two	-	-	108,324
9,080	do	one	-	-	613,838
<hr/> 17,241 chests indigo, value					<hr/> 1,178,786
					<hr/> £1,607,296

Piece Goods Imported in 1803, 1804, and 1805.

Remained in warehouses in 1809	£276,784
Do - - - - - 1810	153,891
Do - - - - - 1811	132,094

But it will still be said, the private-trade between Europe and India has greatly increased since the enlargement of 1793 was granted.

To explain this it is to be remembered, first, that, as already stated, the commanders and officers of the Company's ships are, in a manner, obliged to be traders, and that they have greatly increased in number since 1793: they are forced to carry out goods, and therefore to bring goods back, because, *in general*, specie would be a losing remittance. Secondly, that the number of Europeans in India has been very greatly increased in India since 1793. Every class has increased; the civil, military, and medical servants of the Company; the King's troops, from a few regiments to twenty thousand men; the naval servants of the Crown; ladies, lawyers, free-merchants, free-mariners, and the mixed race of European descent, now become a great multitude, who imitate, as far as they can, the fashions of their fathers. For all these descriptions of persons, every thing required for use or luxury is sent from this country: thus the exports

are necessarily enhanced; and exports being made, returns for them in the commodities of the country become necessary, whether they are sure to answer or not.

A brief view of the state of the private trade between England and India may here be given from the Indian Registers of External Commerce, commencing with 1795-6, when the act of 1793 began to operate in India, to the year 1810-11. But it is to be remarked, that only the Bengal registers commence in 1795-6: those for Madras and Bombay not till 1802-3.

Statement of the Private-Trade between London and Bengal, from the Year 1795-6 to 1801-2 both Years inclusive.

IMPORTS into BENGAL.				EXPORTS from BENGAL.
	Merchandize. Sicca Rupees.	Bullion. Sicca Rupees.	Total. Sicca Rupees.	Merchandize. Sicca Rupees.
1795-6	17,91,623	4,81,538	22,73,161	84,08,800
1796-7	15,49,906	2,33,096	17,83,002	50,79,310
1797-8	11,88,043	3,46,176	15,34,219	69,71,529
1798-9	10,13,105	7,30,209	17,43,314	41,07,834
1799-1800	31,50,696	16,36,405	47,87,101	67,66,649
1800-1801	40,98,360	3,74,112	44,72,472	84,87,336
1801-1802	36,51,650	3,24,019	39,75,669	1,31,97,420
	1,64,43,383	41,25,555	2,05,68,938	5,30,18,878

Statement of the Private-Trade between London and British India, from the Year 1802-3 to 1810-11, both Years inclusive.

	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	Stores and Merchandize.	Bullion.	Total.	Merchandize.	Bullion.	Total.
	Sicca Rupees.	Sicca Rupees.	Sicca Rupees.	Sicca Rupees.	Sa. Rup.	Sicca Rupees.
Bengal, in nine Years, from 1802-3 to 1810-1811.	3,35,33,443	52,19,768	3,87,53,211	7,62,87,574	2,540	7,62,90,114
Madras - -	1,14,96,218	50,17,839	1,65,14,057	93,72,303	5,867	93,78,170
Bombay - -	1,48,03,575	29,65,079	1,77,68,654	93,18,775	53,644	93,72,419
Total - -	5,98,33,236	1,32,02,686	7,30,35,922	9,49,78,652	62,051	9,50,40,703

This is the comparative state of the private-trade with Bengal and India, in former periods, beginning with 1795-6 and at the present time. But the increase is, by no means, to be conceived as merely the result of the enlargement given by the Act of 1793, or afterwards. It is (let it be again observed) most materially to be ascribed to the increase in the number of Company's commanders and officers; to the necessity of making returns in goods from India for their exports; to the great increase of Europeans and their descendants in India; to the vast increase in the culture of indigo, cherished by the Company and permitted to come in their ships before the act of 1793; and what the enlargements of that act and subsequent measures have opened the way for, has been occasional large speculation in cotton piece goods, raw cotton, and indigo, which speculations have more often failed than succeeded. But the great conclusion to be derived from the account of the trade since 1793, is this: in all the period, of nearly twenty years, from that time to the present, in which, undoubtedly, facilities and enlargements, never enjoyed before, have been given for private enterprize and adventure, in which the private trade has considerably increased, and on the whole a very ample experiment has been made, *not one new article for the consumption of the natives of India has been exported*, and little perceivable difference in the few articles of metals and woollens of which they participated before. This is a very remarkable fact, and ought to make a deep impression on all persons who, in any way, interest themselves in this subject. Let us not hear of that unfair charge, so often repeated, that the Company's restrictions have prevented persons from availing themselves of the privilege held out by public regulations. Would the commanders and officers, not restrained by high freight, or any uncertainty of getting tonnage, not have carried out articles for the use of the natives, if they had found that any such were saleable? Would not European residents in India, keen merchants, and acquainted with the dispositions and tastes of the natives, have commissioned for such ar-

articles, if they had seen any vent for them? Would not native merchants, who buy and sell European commodities, have recommended the importation of things for the natives, if they had seen any chance of a sale? Yet, of 54,000 tons allotted for the private trade since 1793, only 21,806 tons have been actually used by private merchants, and these filled wholly with commodities for the use of Europeans. On the whole, then, this may be pronounced a decisive experiment: a decisive proof that there is no opening, nor any material opening to be expected, for the sale of European articles for the use of the natives of India.

Of the import trade from India on private account, since 1793, after what has already been said, it may be sufficient to present the following abstract.

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Of the import trade from India on private account, since 1793, after what has already been said, it may be sufficient to present the following abstract.

IMPORTS *from* INDIA

	<i>Piece Goods.</i>	<i>Raw Silk.</i>	<i>Cotton Wool.</i>	<i>Indigo.</i>	<i>Sugar.</i>
	£	£	£	£	£
1793-4	88,439	34,938	—	47,038	12,465
1794-5	296,098	17,069	11,054	105,346	6,286
1795-6	134,046	3,058	5,693	235,013	8,610
1796-7	319,053	3,315	30,148	273,654	15,525
1797-8	167,210	3,684	67,674	283,893	77,594
1798-9	214,616	—	38,109	440,275	105,200
1799-800	295,658	—	445,413	782,449	94,959
1800-1	197,732	53,009	395,372	491,472	222,118
1801-2	394,890	36,660	142,480	636,046	36,172
1802-3	861,872	37,588	180,915	789,314	41,424
1803-4	884,467	44,963	67,006	602,582	44,643
1804-5	673,787	65,218	93,242	811,214	65,391
1805-6	633,911	12,184	18,201	939,861	—
1806-7	164,111	165,839	122,072	549,871	—
1807-8	69,314	178,128	125,636	1,434,238	9,171
1808-9	18,199	89,085	158,032	510,406	—
1809-10	64,918	12,780	208,190	764,203	—
1810-11	48,043	85,498	550,078	1,382,767	10,827
1811-12	149,079	90,335	257,545	425,074	20,924
Total	5,670,443	933,351	2,916,860	11,504,716	771,309

in PRIVILEGE TRADE.

<i>Salt- petre.</i>	<i>Pepper.</i>	<i>Drugs.</i>	<i>All other Articles.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>	
£	£	£	£	£	
—	—	3,830	—	131,710	1793-4
32,706	—	1,320	—	469,879	1794-5
13,084	—	10,283	—	409,787	1795-6
17,169	—	19,885	—	678,749	1796-7
33,527	—	13,200	—	646,782	1797-8
13,168	—	61,484	8,810	881,662	1798-9
—	18,077	102,804	7,779	1,747,139	1799-800
12,483	40,041	130,009	24,736	1,566,972	1800-1
62,326	70,400	151,354	193,889	1,724,217	1801-2
101,871	120,673	206,054	246,870	2,586,581	1802-3
18,495	37,488	142,858	18,232	1,860,734	1803-4
11,220	33,718	92,479	6,781	1,853,050	1804-5
—	1,376	111,875	5,564	1,722,972	1805-6
—	572	24,230	2,067	1,028,762	1806-7
—	19,918	90,506	4,774	1,931,685	1807-8
—	—	19,372	2,135	797,229	1808-9
—	—	62,491	16,826	1,129,408	1809-10
1,982	38,533	58,791	22,813	2,199,332	1810-11
89	19,921	178,366	27,690	1,169,023	1811-12
318,120	400,717	1,481,191	588,966	24,585,673	Total

IMPORTS *from* INDIA in PRIVATE-TRADE

	<i>Piece Goods.</i>	<i>Raw Silk.</i>	<i>Cotton Wool.</i>	<i>Indigo.</i>	<i>Sugar.</i>
	£	£	£	£	£
1793-4	98,190	—	37,921	218,841	5,054
1794-5	162,967	—	—	140,974	9,834
1795-6	127,146	—	—	202,218	3,807
1796-7	55,303	—	—	148,659	1,324
1797-8	25,254	—	21,740	141,506	499
1798-9	29,499	—	11,334	266,176	6,197
1799-800	40,077	1,034	10,538	226,708	4,140
1800-1	91,387	46,615	8,889	280,886	17,332
1801-2	34,965	274	—	168,588	7,211
1802-3	207,799	—	8,151	89,261	827
1803-4	174,848	11,164	—	100,052	924
1804-5	180,034	60,233	593	269,926	—
1805-6	138,089	32,044	7,636	452,997	—
1806-7	36,401	86,231	19,485	224,515	135
1807-8	42,229	74,902	18,104	419,580	—
1808-9	47,334	12,696	35,220	300,152	—
1809-10	12,646	90,433	22,021	231,735	—
1810-11	76,335	121,695	7,626	360,180	1,692
1811-12	51,112	148,867	—	47,637	—
Total.	1,631,615	686,188	209,258	4,250,591	58,686

of COMMANDERS and OFFICERS.

<i>Saltpetre.</i>	<i>Pepper.</i>	<i>Drugs.</i>	<i>All other Articles.</i>	<i>TOTAL.</i>	
£	£	£	£	£	
—	5,280	76,640	3	441,929	1793-4
—	—	60,093	—	373,868	1794-5
29	2,593	121,823	925	458,541	1795-6
—	11,163	57,453	910	274,812	1796-7
—	—	96,389	7,772	293,160	1797-8
—	1,768	129,372	3,715	448,061	1798-9
3,060	8,041	64,990	12,220	370,808	1799-800
—	4,378	50,222	36,710	546,419	1800-1
97	12,501	41,326	3,465	268,427	1801-2
—	18,367	102,530	29,117	456,052	1802-3
—	8,388	18,411	1,516	315,303	1803-4
1,058	7,471	5,819	45,852	570,986	1804-5
144	7,395	84,445	5,360	728,110	1805-6
14	980	47,529	9,556	424,846	1806-7
377	—	45,960	16,724	617,876	1807-8
48	271	83,503	41,379	520,603	1808-9
156	4,762	66,414	5,108	433,275	1809-10
194	17,664	91,678	13,422	690,396	1810-11
28	1,398	60,494	19	309,555	1811-12
5,205	112,420	1,315,091	233,773	8,543,027	Total

SHORT ABSTRACT.

Total Privilege	-	-	-	-	£24,585,673
Private Trade	-	-	-	-	3,543,027
					<hr/>
					33,128,700
					<hr/>

Which contained:

Indigo	£11,504,716	
	4,290,591	
	<hr/>	£15,795,307
Cotton	£2,916,860	
	209,258	
	<hr/>	£3,126,118
		<hr/>
		£18,921,425
All other articles		14,207,275
		<hr/>

It may be proper to point out to attention, the great proportion which the articles of indigo and cotton bear to the whole of these imports; and likewise to refer to the great quantities of these two articles which, it has already appeared, remain still in the Company's warehouses, either unsold or uncleared. Of the practicability of enlarging the imports into this country of Indian productions, fit for the European market, it was formerly stated by the Court, that the diligence, not only of the different East-India Companies of Europe, but of individual Europeans trading through the whole extent of the Indian Seas, has been excited, during three centuries, to discover articles which might be profitably exported to Europe, and, after all the experience thus acquired, particularly in the present day, when the coasting and internal trade of India has been greatly enlarged, it is not reasonably to be assumed, upon merely theoretical ideas, that there is any source of materials, raw or manufactured in India, yet undiscovered, by which the imports from India into this country can be profitably augmented: and, with respect to those articles which may now be considered as the staples of India, namely, cotton piece goods, raw silk, indigo, raw cotton, and sugar, the demand for the

first is reduced and limited, by the vast growth and excellence of the cotton manufactures of Britain and Europe; the second, to whatever extent demanded, can be brought home in the ships of the Company; the third, already imported to an extent that nearly supplies the consumption of Europe, may also be easily carried home in the same channel; and the article of raw cotton, brought from a great distance, at an unavoidably high freight, which renders it incapable, when this country is engaged in war, and North America and Portugal at peace with us, of entering into competition with the cottons of Georgia and Brazil, both superior in quality, and brought to this market more expeditiously, to meet the fluctuations of price and demand, and at a far cheaper rate of freight. As to sugar, if it could be imported to this market, so as to rival the produce of our West-India colonies, which it cannot be in time of war, surely this is not a trade which could be, on the whole, profitable to the nation: and no other great article of Indian produce has ever been thought of; except hemp, of which the culture is still in an early stage in India, not capable of standing a competition with Russia, whenever our intercourse with that country is open. It is in this state of things, when the Company cannot find vent for more exports in the East, when their warehouses are filled with goods from the East for which there is no demand, and when they suffer from the continental restrictions in common with all his Majesty's subjects, that the Petitioners, whose chief complaint is of a general stagnation of trade, censure the Company for not enlarging their's.

Ninthly.—The demand of a full and entire freedom of trade to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, including China, and all the countries within the Charter of the East-India Company.

Such are the views of the Petitioners: professedly no less than a complete subversion of the fabric of the East-India Company, and all the great commercial establishments connected with it; involving, also, the hazard of the political interests of the British empire,

Indian and European. Certainly it must be presumed, the Petitioners expect such advantages to follow from all these changes, as shall compensate for the immense sacrifices which they require; but your Committee hope, it has sufficiently appeared from the preceding discussion, that all such expectations are illusory and vain. If, however, they are not indeed the offspring of sanguine theories, but the result of sober rational consideration, might not the same sobriety of thought be expected to pay an equitable regard to the ruin which would be inflicted on existing interests, and to look to some suitable provision against the possible contingency of final disappointment? Yet these important objects seem to have received no adequate attention. Against the alledged danger of excessive speculation (a danger which is, in fact, a public concern), it is argued, "that the enterprize of individuals is uniformly limited by their means and success." But if they involve all their friends, and sink in their attempts, and this should be the case of many, would not the result be a general calamity? The argument of the Petitioners assumes, that the new trade will be finally successful; but the foregoing review deprives them of all right to go upon this supposition.

For the deep injuries which all the London establishments connected with the Eastern trade would receive, there is absolutely no relief or reparation of any kind adverted to; and, for the Company, they are told, first of their wealth, knowledge, and experience (all of which have been before disparaged), as enabling them to oppose unassisted private efforts; that, if they can carry on trade to greater advantage than individuals, they have nothing to fear, and that they will reap their reward in competition. All this is particularly applied to the China trade, which is not a new trade, nor, as has been shewn, either susceptible of increase, or likely to be preserved at all as a general trade. The transfer of it to other hands would add nothing to the nation, whilst the entire benefit of it is necessary for the support of the political interests of the Company. Secondly, it is proposed, that for in-

demonstrating and remunerating the claims of the Company, they shall "have a fair and equal impost on the "trade in question." If the trade and rate of impost were both likely to be considerable, which your Committee see no reason to suppose, the idea of an indemnification for the whole, by giving afterwards a part (and probably a small part), can hardly be treated as a serious idea.

But for the detriment which the Company, in their political capacity, might sustain, for all the ill consequences that might ensue to the government and immense population of India, no provision whatever is proposed. And against an entire failure of the vast prospects, now so sanguinely entertained, this consolation is at last administered, that "the very worst that "can occur, in the event of the abandonment of the "trade by the public, would be, *that matters might "return again to their present state.*"

But can it be seriously supposed, that after the fabric of the Company, and its immense dependent and connected establishments in England, in India, and China, should have been set aside, and left to decay and ruin; when India should have been laid open and the China establishment superseded, and so much capital sunk, that things could be brought back to their former state? The possibility of such a mighty convulsion, and the ease with which it is contemplated by the Petitioners, may be sufficient to excite a salutary fear of the rage of theory, speculation, and innovation; may suggest the prudence of stopping short of the precipice to which they would conduct us; of at least resting at some point, so far safe as not to expose the whole of the empire, Indian and European, to the terrible alternative here brought into view. A great extension of the trade to or from the east, the object for which such dangers are to be run, is shewn, in the preceding pages, to be impracticable; and it has been also shewn, that in the prosecution of the attempt to obtain it, the interests of British India, and of the finances of this country, would be endangered: but if an experiment is still required to be made in the vast continent of Hindostan

and its adjacent islands (for to push the experiment into China would be to risk the trade of that country, and all its advantages, without the chance of any benefit) the means of making a large, ample experiment, in which the whole nation may participate, through the port of London, are now offered; means which shall give the fairest opportunity to ascertain the practicability of extending the trade, without breaking down present establishments, or exposing the empire, in case of failure, to the most disastrous consequences. At the safe point, therefore, here described, your Committee humbly hope the wisdom of His Majesty's Ministers and of Parliament will still see fit to rest.

(Signed)

HUGH INGLIS,
ROBERT THORNTON,
JACOB BOSANQUET,
WM. F. ELPHINSTONE,
THEOPHILUS METCALFE,
JOSEPH COTTON,
CHARLES GRANT,
GEORGE SMITH,
EDWARD PARRY,
SWEENEY TOONE,
WILLIAM ASTELL.

THE END.

A
DEBATE
AT A
GENERAL COURT OF PROPRIETORS
OF
EAST-INDIA STOCK,
ON
LORD CASTLEREAGH'S PROPOSITIONS.

EAST-INDIA QUESTION.

A

DEBATE

AT A

GENERAL COURT OF PROPRIETORS

OF

EAST-INDIA STOCK,

ON

WEDNESDAY THE 24TH OF MARCH, 1813,

FOR

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION

The Propositions

SUBMITTED BY

LORD CASTLEREAGH

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BY THE EDITOR OF THE FORMER DEBATES.

WITH AN

APPENDIX.

LONDON:

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1813.

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profits thereof, and to manage the same
in the most beneficial manner possible.
They have also the honor to announce
that they have been appointed
sole agents for the sale of all the
property of the late Lord of the Manor of
St. Martin's, in the City of London,
and to receive and pay all the rents and
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As the Interest, and perhaps the Fate of the BRITISH and INDIAN EMPIRES depend on the Decisions of this momentous Crisis, the Editor feels it incumbent upon him to put upon Record all the Discussions at the several Courts of Proprietors on the INDIA QUESTION.

He therefore submits the following Debate to the Perusal of the Public; and pledges himself to lay before them whatever future ones may occur at the same Place, and on the same Subject; in order to render the Question clear, and the Transactions complete.

PROCEEDINGS, &c.

EAST-INDIA HOUSE, *March 24, 1813.*

THE Minutes of the last Court having been read, and certain accounts and official documents having been laid before the Proprietors, in conformity with the 3d, 4th and 6th sections of the 1st chapter of the Bye-Laws of the Company ;

Sir *Hugh Inglis* rose and stated, that the Court then assembled was made special, for the purpose of laying before the members, the Resolutions which were submitted to the House of Commons, on Monday night, by Lord Castlereagh, and had been received by the Court of Directors only on the preceding day — He (Sir Hugh Inglis) had seen the Earl of Buckinghamshire on Monday; and, at 11 o'clock on that day the Resolutions were not finally settled. This circumstance was mentioned as a reason for their not having been sooner transmitted to the Court of Directors. — Lord Castlereagh, in his opening speech, expressed himself in the highest terms of

the India Company:—He spoke in the warmest manner, both of themselves, their government, and the general good management of the whole of their concerns.—But he (Sir Hugh) could not but lament, that there were some of his propositions which did not correspond exactly with the sentiments contained in his opening speech. If the Court pleased, those propositions should be now laid before them, after which he would make a very few observations.

The propositions (for which see Appendix) having been read,

Sir *Hugh Inglis*, in continuation, observed, that the most material of those propositions was the *third* (not but the others were also highly deserving of attention), and, with the permission of the Court, he would have that particular proposition, to which he intended chiefly to confine his remarks, read over again.

This having been done accordingly, Sir *Hugh Inglis* proceeded. He said he had already stated, that Lord Castlereagh, in his opening speech, spoke in the highest terms of the excellence of the Company's government abroad, of the correctness of their management in that House, and of the ability of the gentlemen placed by them in the various departments. After this just eulogium on the Company and their establishments,

he was grieved to find that such a resolution, as that last read to the Court, was introduced, which must have the effect of breaking down that system, so properly described and panegyrised by the noble lord. (*Hear! hear!*) He understood it was stated, that the Company had not capital sufficient to carry on their trade. But those whom he was addressing would recollect, for it had been stated in official documents, and asserted in that Court, that the Company had large sums to pay, in this country, from the resources of India.—How, he would ask, were those payments to be made, except through the medium of commerce? There was one item at present chargeable on their funds, the payment of interest on the India debt, amounting to £1,500,000 per annum, which, if it were paid, or payable in India, would lighten their funds at home to the extent of that sum. There were also other payments, connected with the India territories, to a very large amount.—These arose from the necessary recruiting for His Majesty's troops, sums granted to retired officers, and other items, making an aggregate of between 3 and £4,000,000 sterling, annually.—The funds to pay these must be furnished from the territorial revenues of India, and would, under other circumstances, supply a landed capital sufficient to carry on all the

trade that could be established with that country, or for which consumption could be found at home. If, however, it was not sufficient, the private trade, already established, was more than adequate to meet every demand in this country, and to take up all the surplus produce abroad. Unfortunately His Majesty's Ministers took a different view of the subject; they seemed to think, that there were no bounds to the trade between India and Great Britain.—Unhappily, however, there were many gentlemen, perhaps some of them in that room, who from dear bought experience, could assert the contrary.

If the trade were extended to the outports, the Court must be aware, that it would materially interfere with many arrangements of the Company.—Their sales were brought forward at particular and stated times; and, on the produce of those sales they had to depend, for paying the demands which were made upon them.—Now, if the trade were opened, when the Company declared a sale, the merchants at the Outports might anticipate it a month, a fortnight, or a week, and, when they expected money, to answer various demands, their goods would remain unsold in their warehouses. (*Hear! hear!*)

But that was not the only evil which they would have to encounter.—By the proposed al-